NEW LONE WOLF & CUB

新・子連れ狼

KAZUO KOIKE
HIDEKI MORI

1

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1

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KAZUO KOIKE

ART
HIDEKI MORI

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NEW LONE WOLF AND CUB VOLUME 1
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Dark Horse Manga
A division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc.
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

DarkHorse.com

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First edition: June 2014
ISBN 978-1-59307-649-8

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America

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新・子連れ狼
LONE WOLF
原作・小池一夫
作画・森 秀樹
作画原案・小島剛夕

A Note to Readers

NEW LONE WOLF AND CUB is a carefully researched re-creation of Edo-period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain terms of the period that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous words with multiple meanings. In the glossary, you may encounter these words. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning is intended, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet.

Some characters in this series come from the Satsuma region of Japan, an area with its own distinctive dialect. Some common words in this dialect have been left untranslated to better give the impression of this dialect being spoken. These terms are defined in the glossary. Other characters in the story come from places or cultural strata (country folk, gangsters) for which there is no direct translation to identify these characteristics. Here they are given corresponding Americanized speech patterns to highlight these traits.

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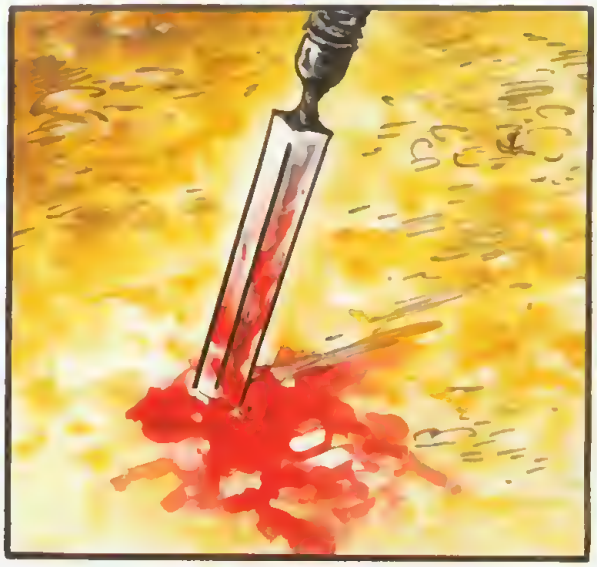
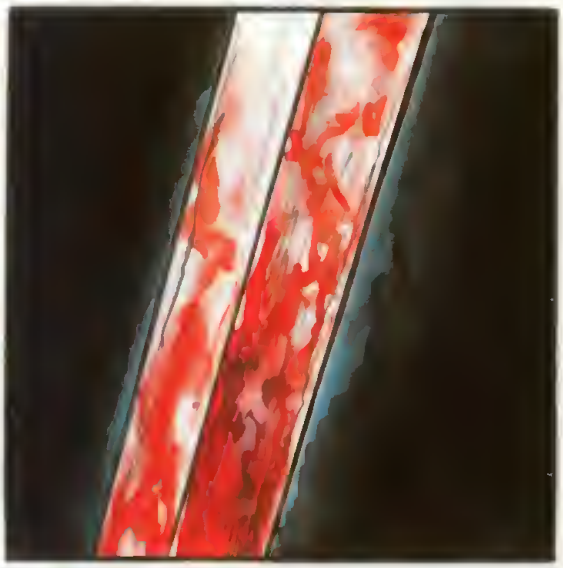
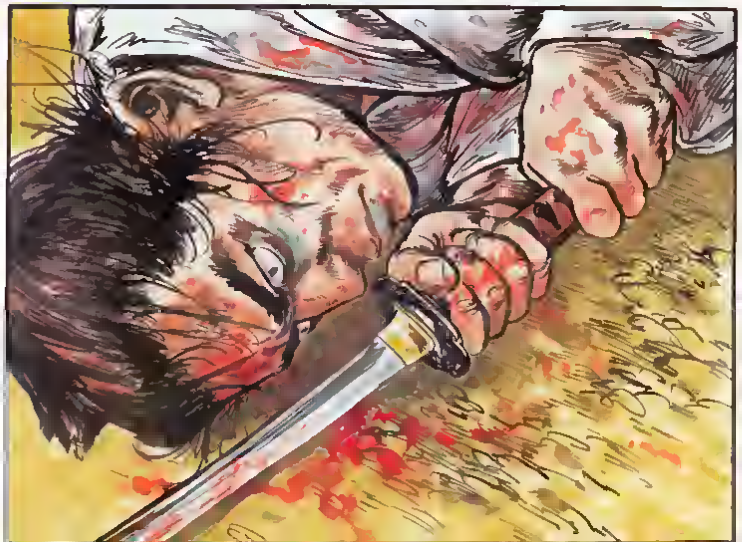


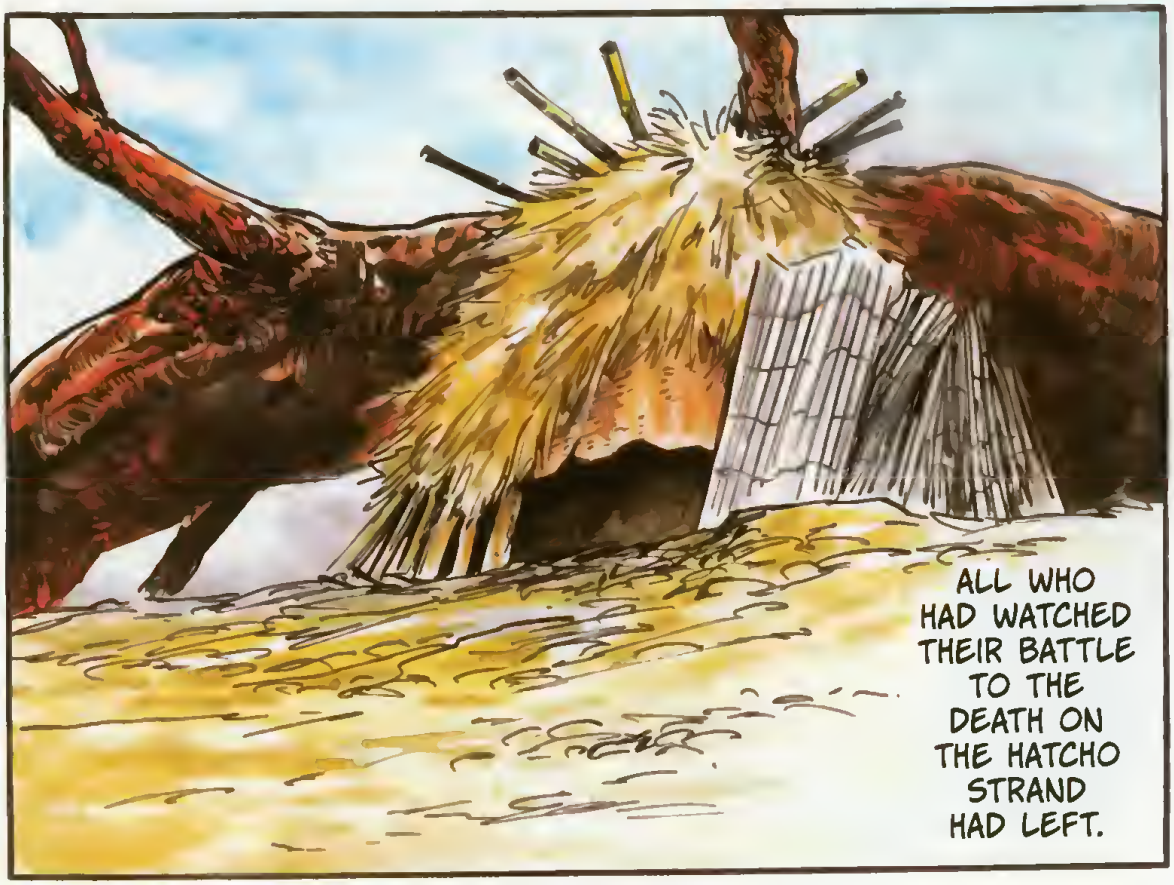


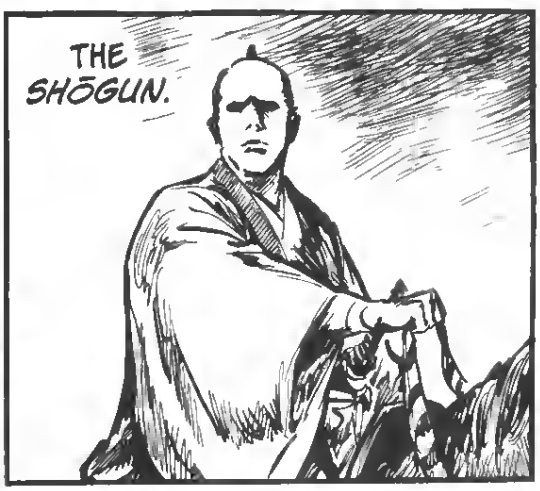
其ノ一

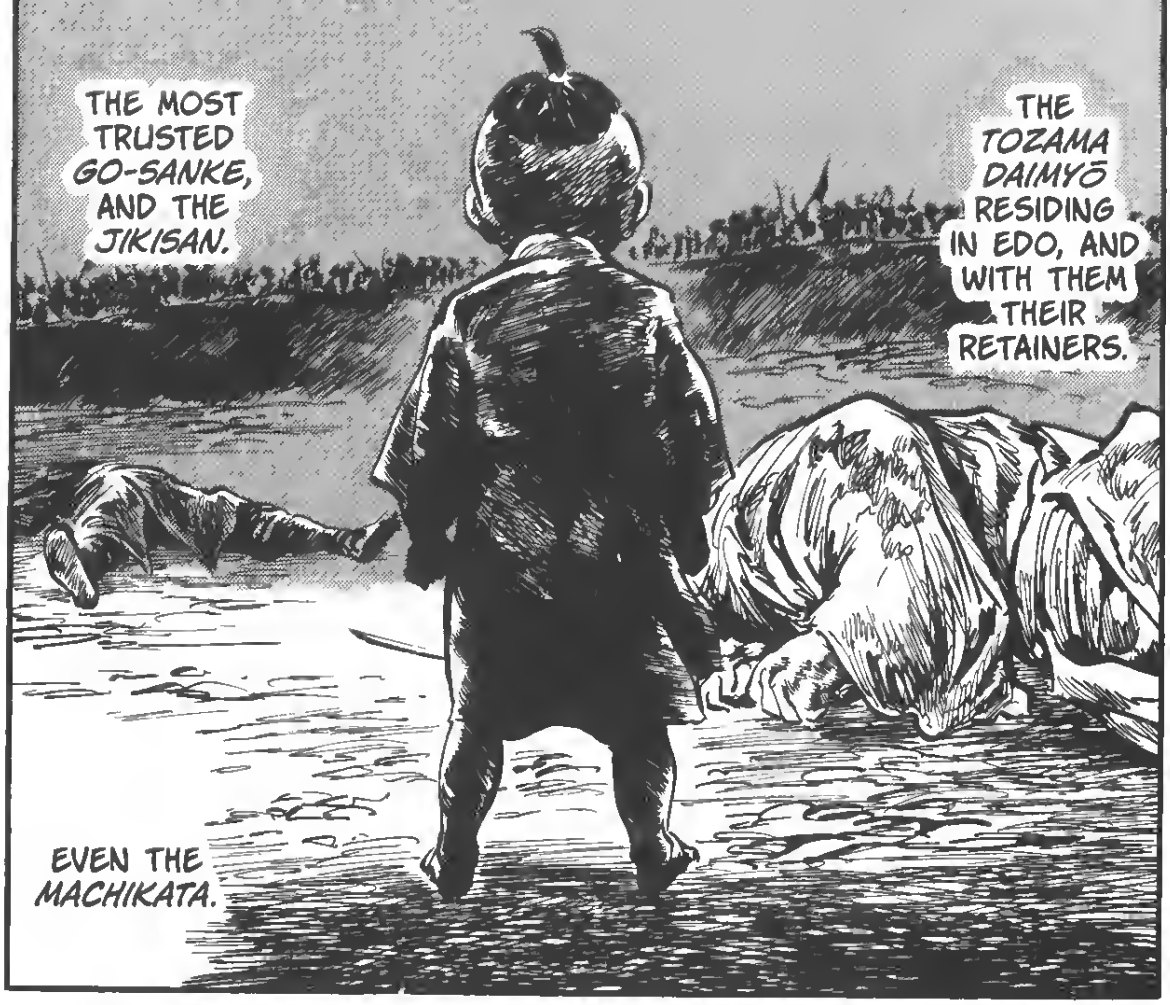
示現の鞘

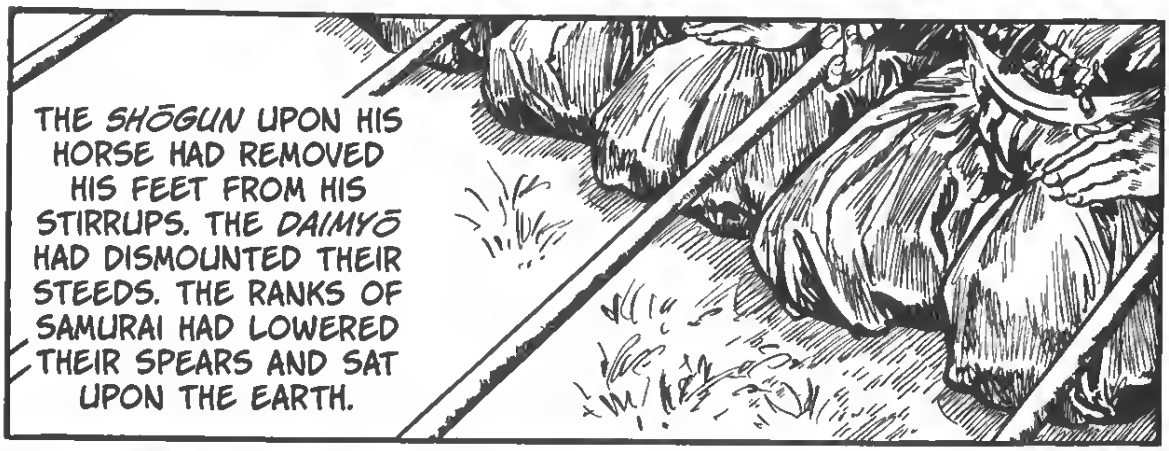
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD
PART 1

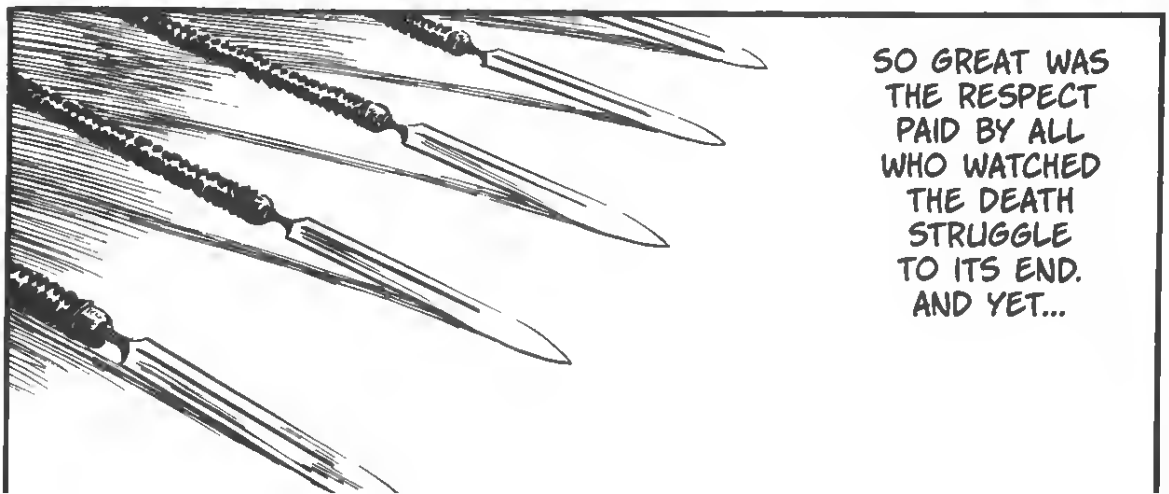


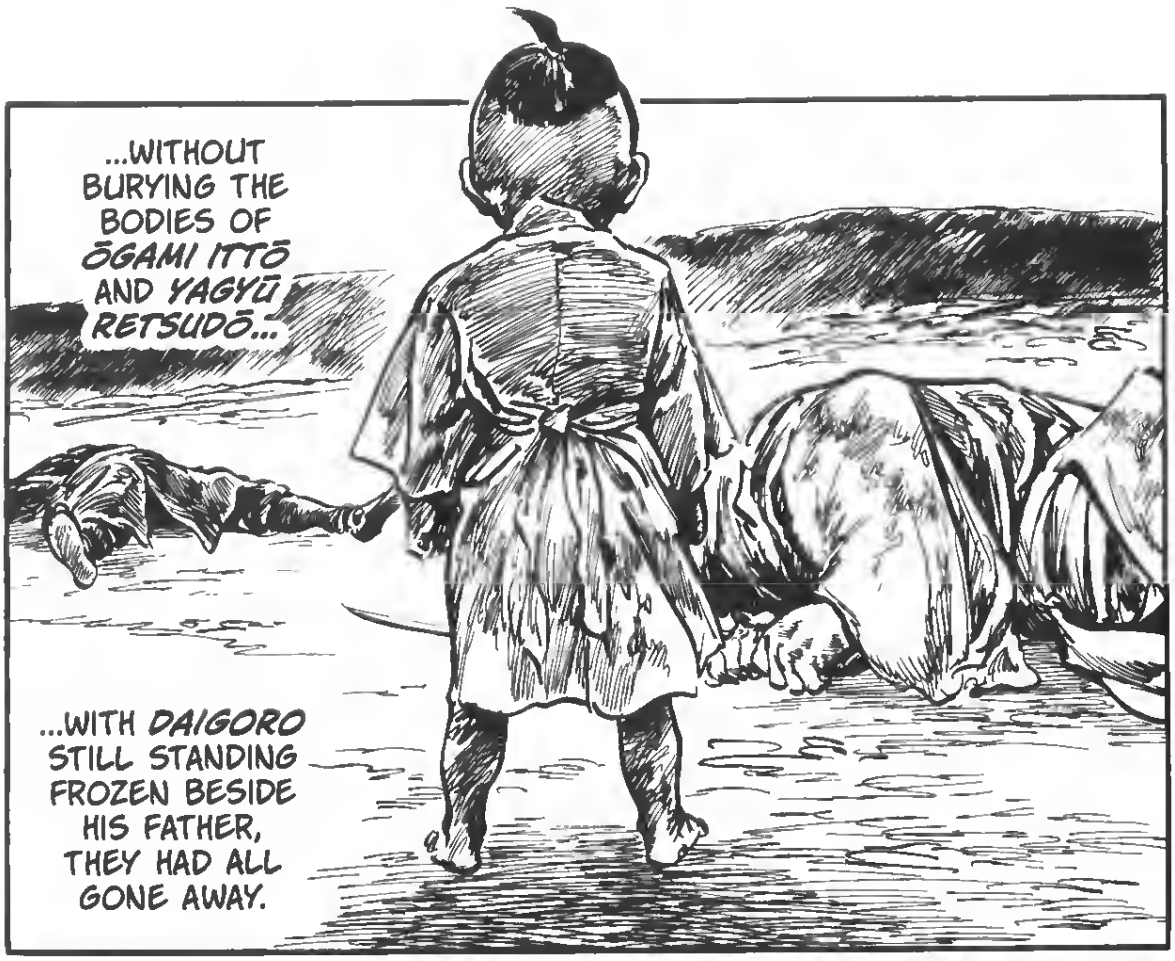

ALL WHO HAD WATCHED THEIR BATTLE TO THE DEATH ON THE HATCHO STRAND HAD LEFT.

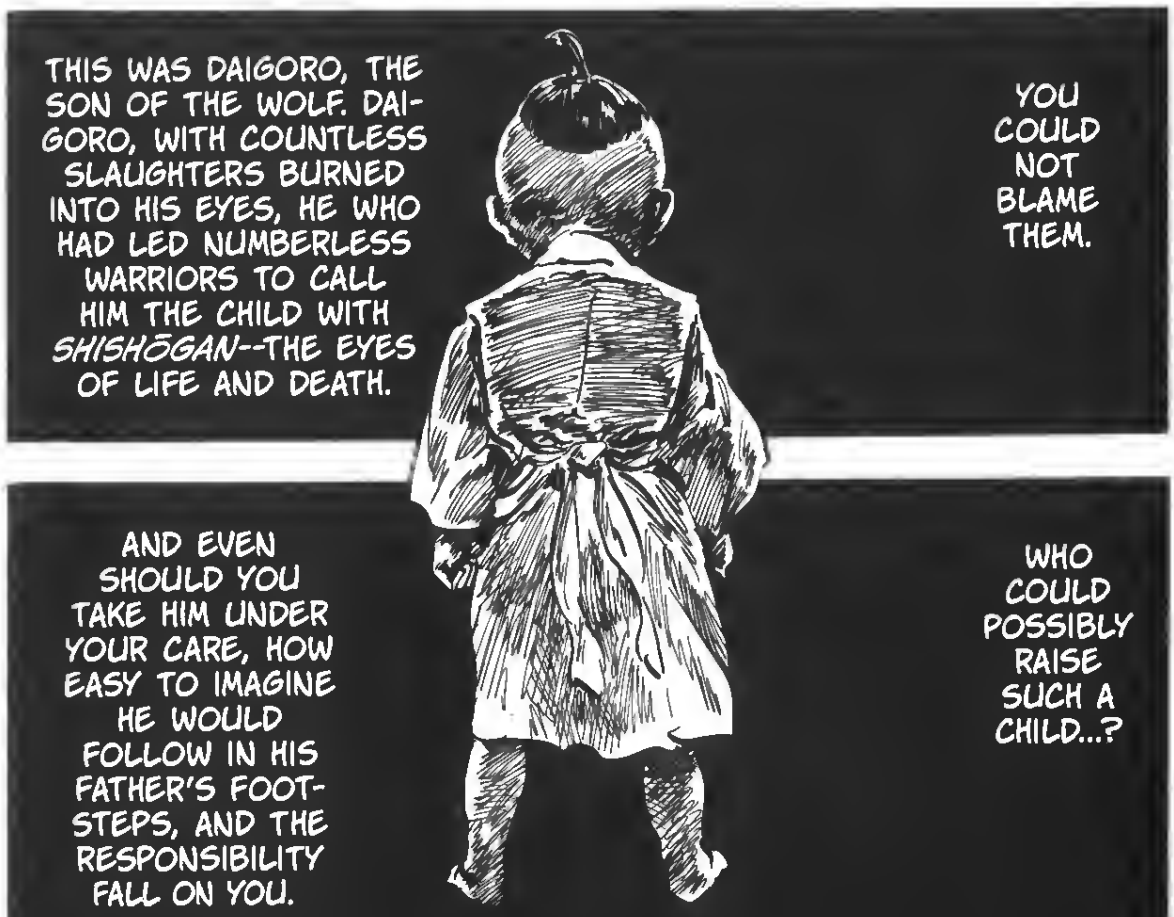

THE
SHŌGUN.


THE MOST TRUSTED GO-SANKE, AND THE JIKISAN.
THE TOZAMA DAIMYŌ RESIDING IN EDO, AND WITH THEM THEIR RETAINERS.
EVEN THE MACHIKATA.


THE SHŌGUN UPON HIS HORSE HAD REMOVED HIS FEET FROM HIS STIRRUPS. THE DAIMYŌ HAD DISMOUNTED THEIR STEEDS. THE RANKS OF SAMURAI HAD LOWERED THEIR SPEARS AND SAT UPON THE EARTH.


SO GREAT WAS THE RESPECT PAID BY ALL WHO WATCHED THE DEATH STRUGGLE TO ITS END. AND YET...


...WITHOUT BURYING THE BODIES OF *ŌGAMI ITTŌ* AND *YAGYŪ RETSUDŌ*...
...WITH *DAIGORO* STILL STANDING FROZEN BESIDE HIS FATHER, THEY HAD ALL GONE AWAY.

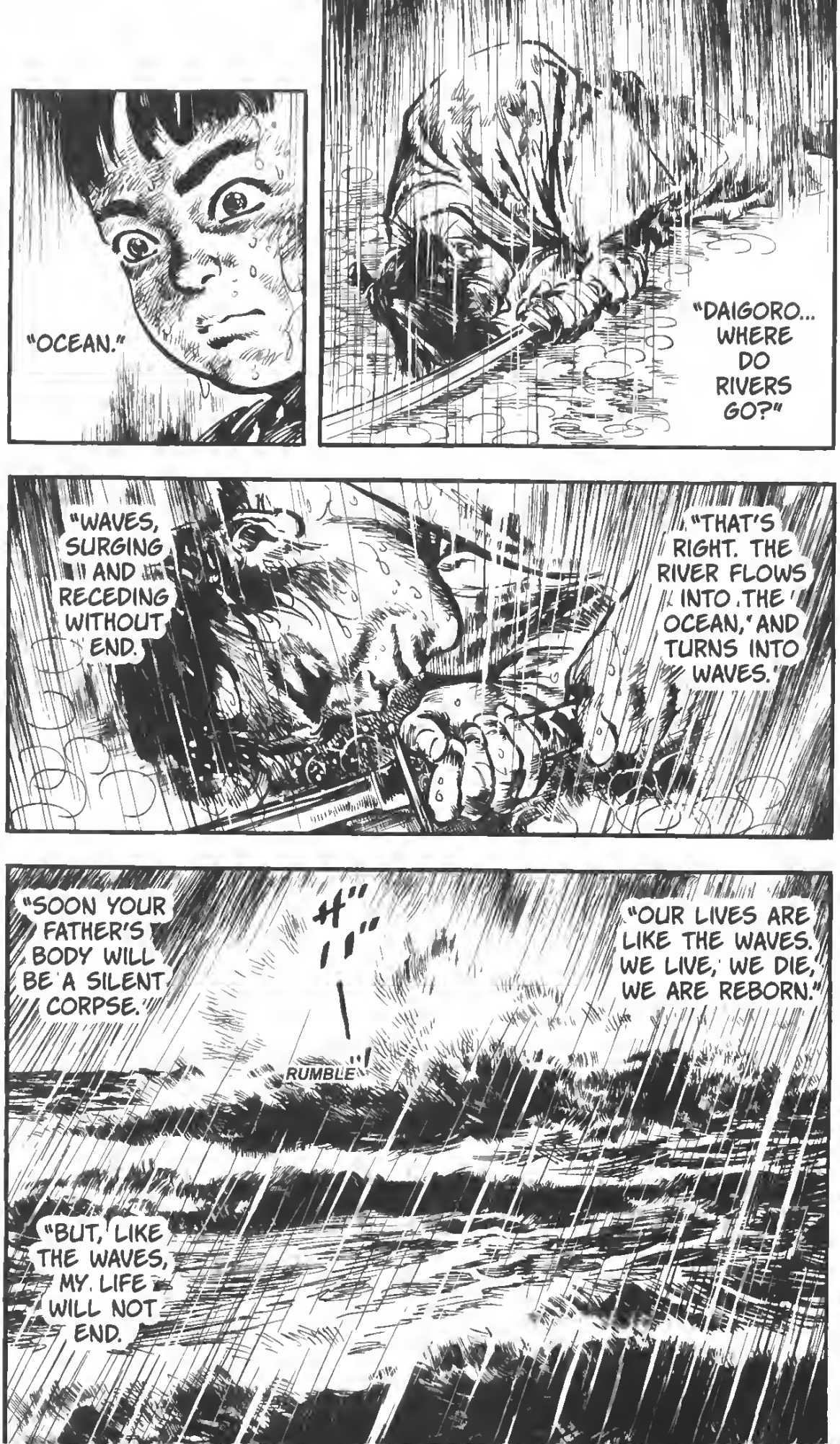

THIS WAS DAIGORO, THE SON OF THE WOLF. DAIGORO, WITH COUNTLESS SLAUGHTERS BURNED INTO HIS EYES, HE WHO HAD LED NUMBERLESS WARRIORS TO CALL HIM THE CHILD WITH *SHISHŌGAN*--THE EYES OF LIFE AND DEATH.
YOU COULD NOT BLAME THEM.
AND EVEN SHOULD YOU TAKE HIM UNDER YOUR CARE, HOW EASY TO IMAGINE HE WOULD FOLLOW IN HIS FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FALL ON YOU.
WHO COULD POSSIBLY RAISE SUCH A CHILD...?

NO ONE WHO SERVED THE SHOGUNATE COULD DARE TO BURY THE CORPSE OF ŌGAMI ITTŌ.
AS FOR THAT FATHER'S CORPSE, JUST TRY TOUCHING IT, AND WHAT THEN...?

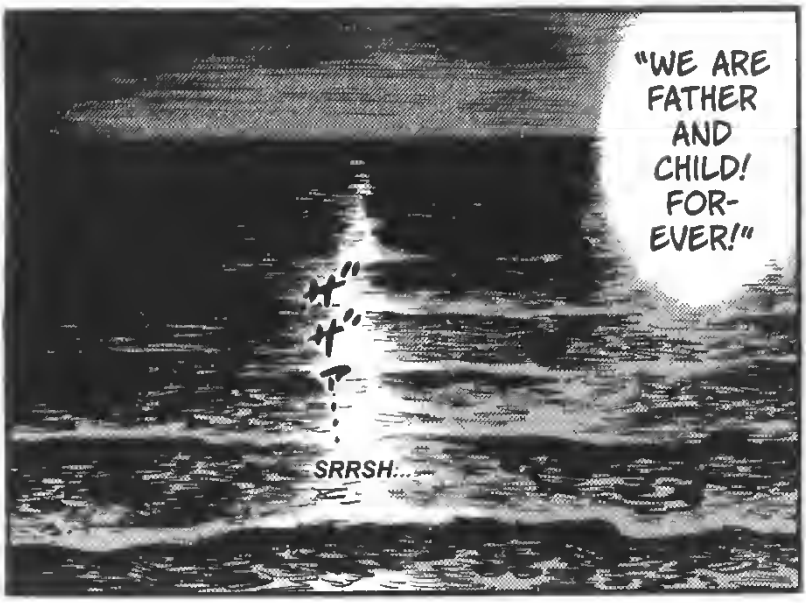
...HOW WISE TO SETTLE ALL DISCREETLY, BY LETTING THEM ROT WHERE THEY LAY, BECOMING ONE WITH THE *FUKI* VINES OF THE FIELD...
IN WHICH CASE...
AND YET, IF YAGYŪ RETSUDŌ ALONE WERE LAID TO REST, THE WARY *TOZAMA DAIMYŌ* WOULD NOT STAND IDLY BY.

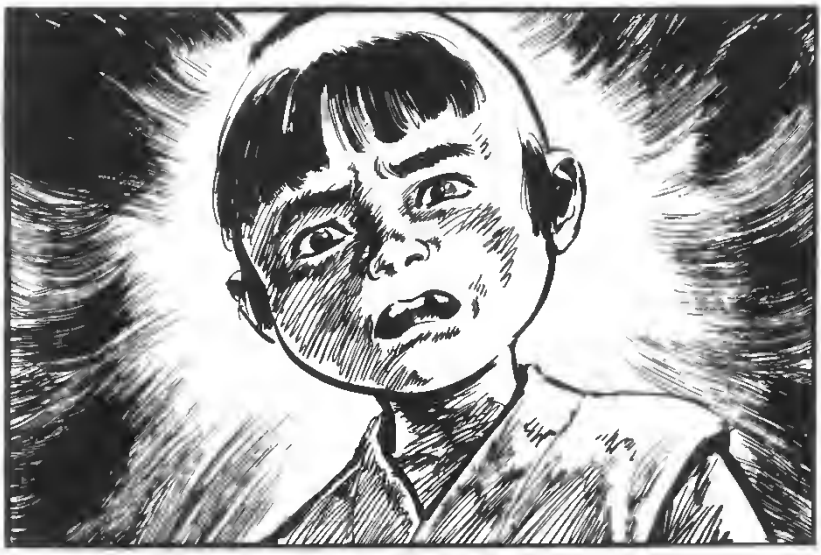
コロ
RMB
コロ
RMBRRM
PRESSING PALMS IN SILENT PRAYER, SHEDDING TEARS IN THEIR HEARTS FOR DAIGORO'S VALOR...THEY ALL SLIPPED AWAY.

SSSSHHH


"OCEAN."
"DAIGORO... WHERE DO RIVERS GO?"
"WAVES, SURGING AND RECEDING WITHOUT END.
"THAT'S RIGHT. THE RIVER FLOWS INTO THE OCEAN, AND TURNS INTO WAVES."
"SOON YOUR FATHER'S BODY WILL BE A SILENT CORPSE."
"OUR LIVES ARE LIKE THE WAVES. WE LIVE, WE DIE, WE ARE REBORN."
RUMBLE
"BUT, LIKE THE WAVES, MY LIFE WILL NOT END.

"YOURS, TOO, DAIGORO. OUR LIVES ARE INDESTRUC-TIBLE. IMMORTAL!
"HIS BODY MAY DIE, BUT HIS LIFE IS ETERNAL.
"LIKE THE WAVES, YOUR FATHER WILL TRAVEL TO THE SHORE OF THE NEXT LIFE
"IN THAT WORLD, AND ALL WORLDS, YOU ARE MY SON!
"IN THAT WORLD OF REBIRTH, I AM STILL YOUR FATHER.
"THOUGH MY EYES SHUT, MY LIPS CLOSE... DO NOT FEAR.
"THOUGH MY BODY FALLS, NEVER QUAIL.
"THOUGH MY SKIN SPLITS AND BLOOD FLIES, NEVER SHRINK


"WE ARE FATHER AND CHILD! FOR-EVER!"
SRRSH...



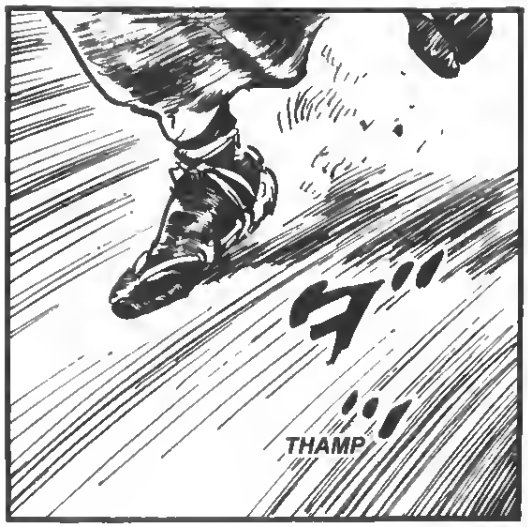
SRSSH...

PA...
...PAAA...

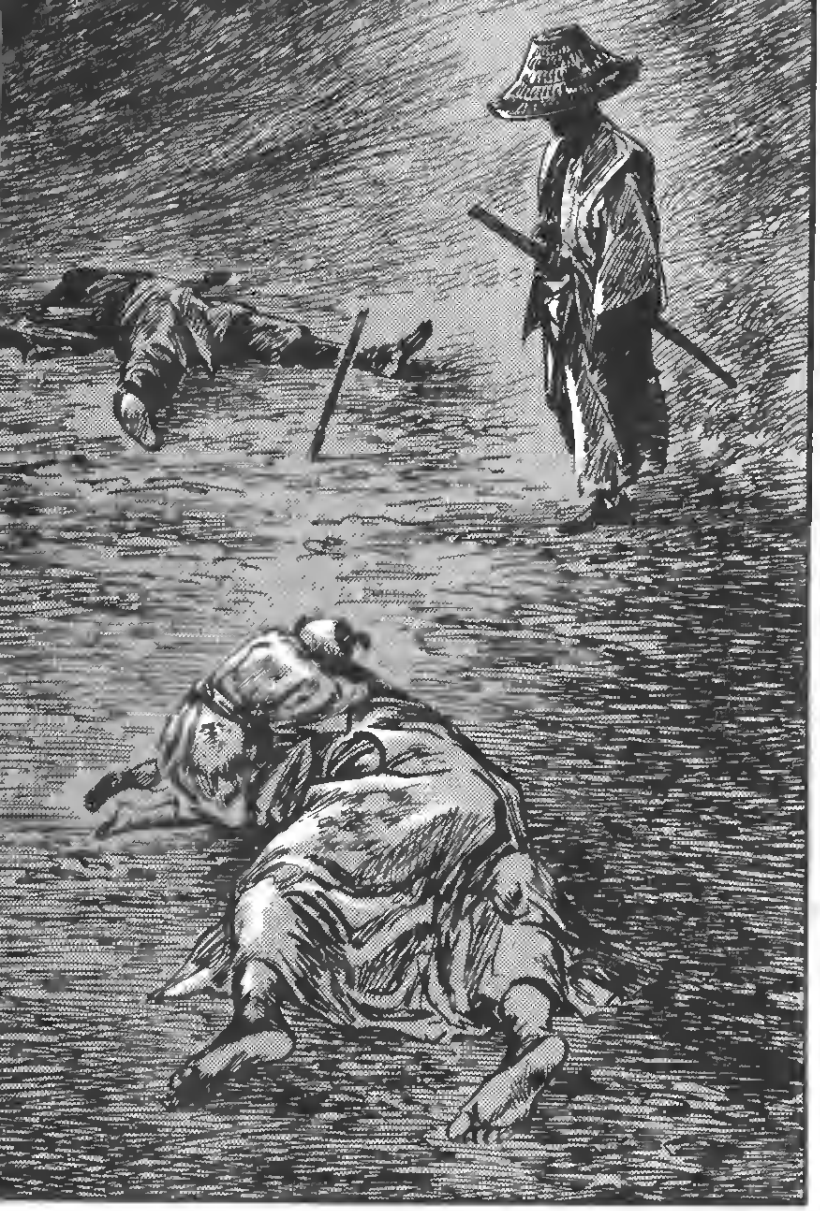
HRN?

COULD THIS ...?

AS I THOUGHT. DŌTA-NUKI!


THAMP

HIGO DŌTANUKI KŌZUKE-NO-SUKE MASAKUNI*
*SEE FOOTNOTES

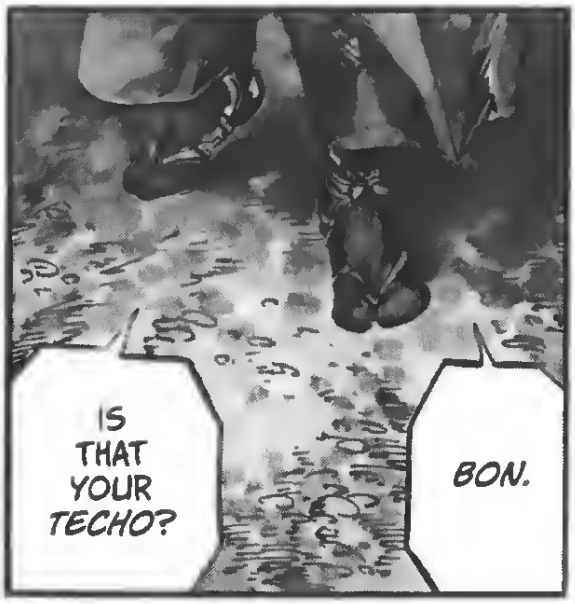


HNG!
HE LIVES.

其之一
示現の鞘(二)
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 2

ゴクッ…
GLP
ゴクッ
GLLP

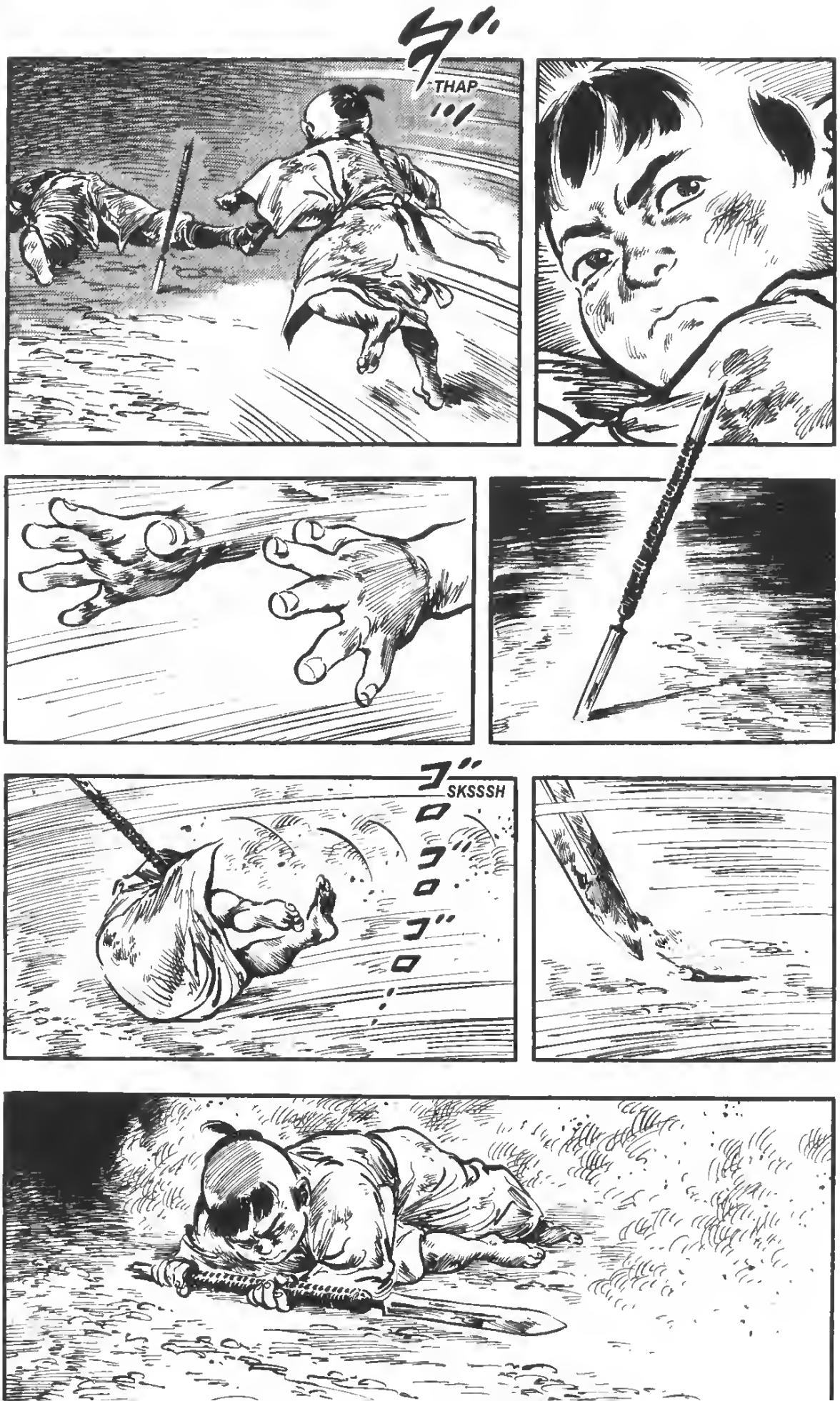
LITTLE ONE, ARE YOU AWAKE?
THAPP

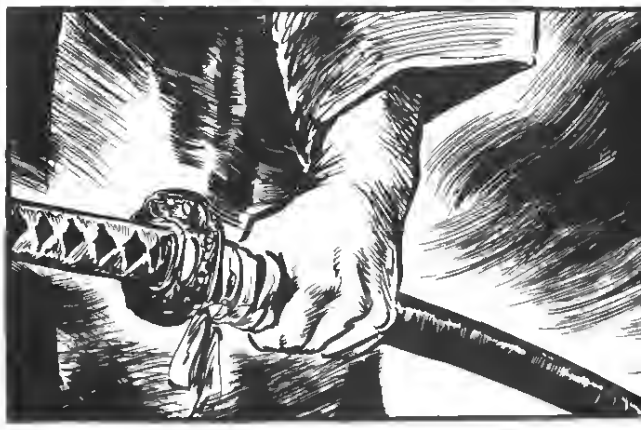

IS THAT YOUR TECHO?
BON.

YOU TRY HARD, BON.
KRNCH
BUT THE DEAD MUST BE LAID TO REST.
STAND ASIDE.

HRMM...

GRRP
LITTLE ONE. GO GET YOUR TECHO'S SCABBARD.


THAP
SKSSSH



YOU *UNDERSTAND*, LITTLE ONE? WHAT IT MEANS TO TAKE MY SWORD IN MY *LEFT HAND*?!
HOH ...!

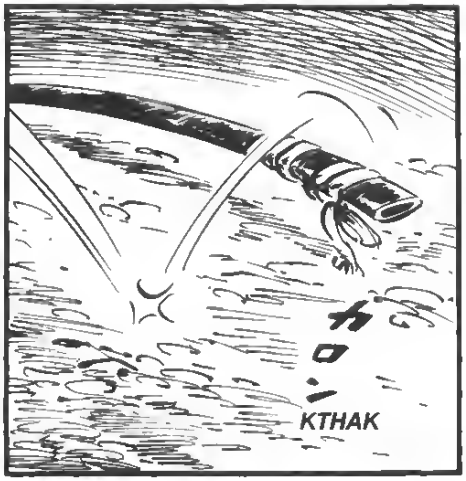
YOU HAVE A GOOD SPIRIT.
...WILL YOU DO WHAT I SAY?
IF OI'S SWORD FITS PERFECTLY INTO YOUR TECHO'S SCABBARD...
SHK
NGN

YOU CON-FOUNDED FOOL!!
LISTEN WELL!
IS NOT THE SCABBARD THAT HOLDS IT ALSO HIS LIFE AND SOUL?!
A WARRIOR'S SWORD IS HIS SOUL! HIS LIFE!

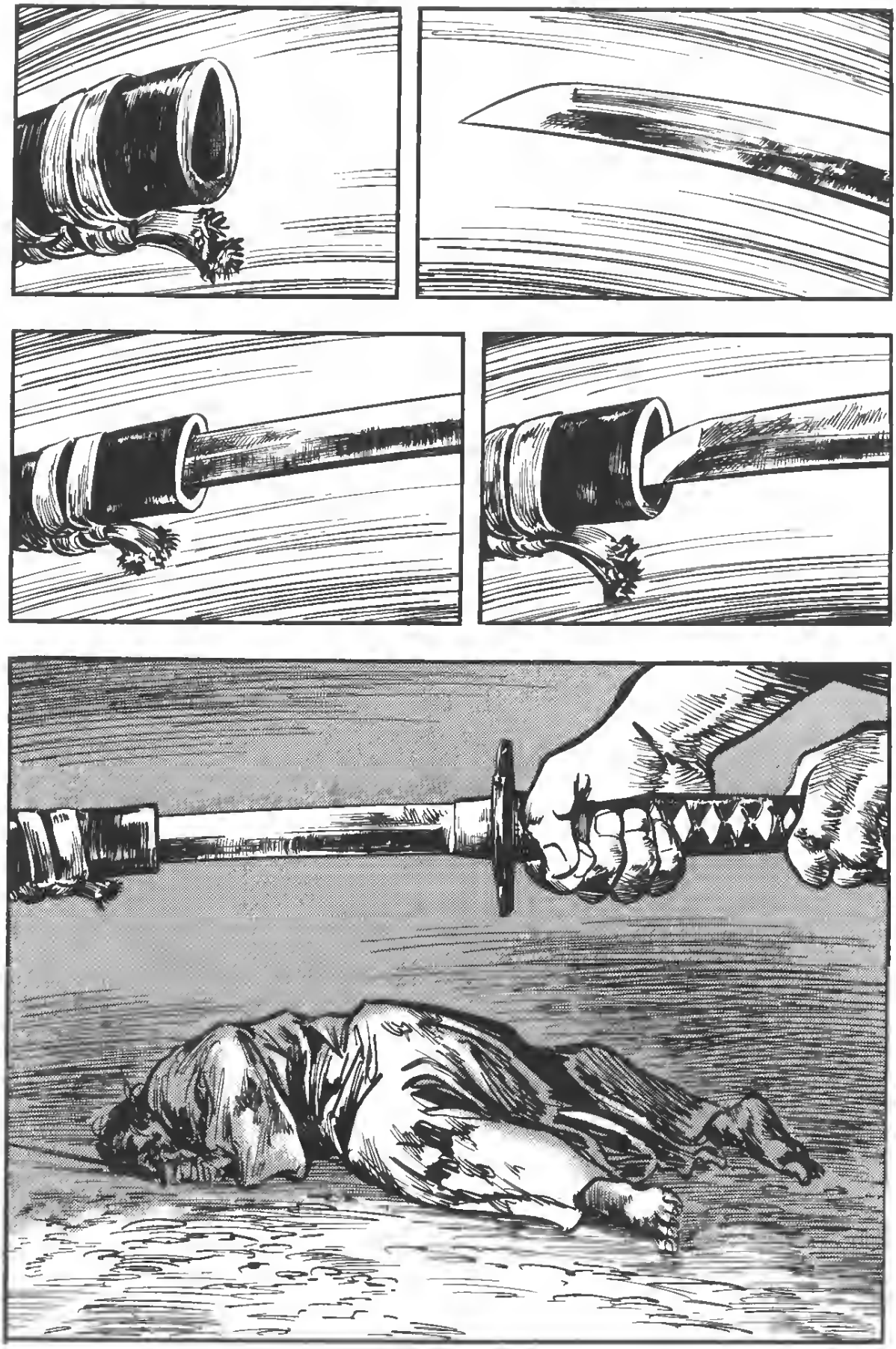
IF OI'S SWORD FITS YOUR TECHO'S SCABBARD, WILL THAT NOT MEAN YOUR TECHO ACCEPTS OI'S SOUL?!
THAT HIS SOUL ACCEPTS MINE?!
THAT HE WILL PLACE YOU IN MY CARE!
DO YOU UNDER-STAND ?!

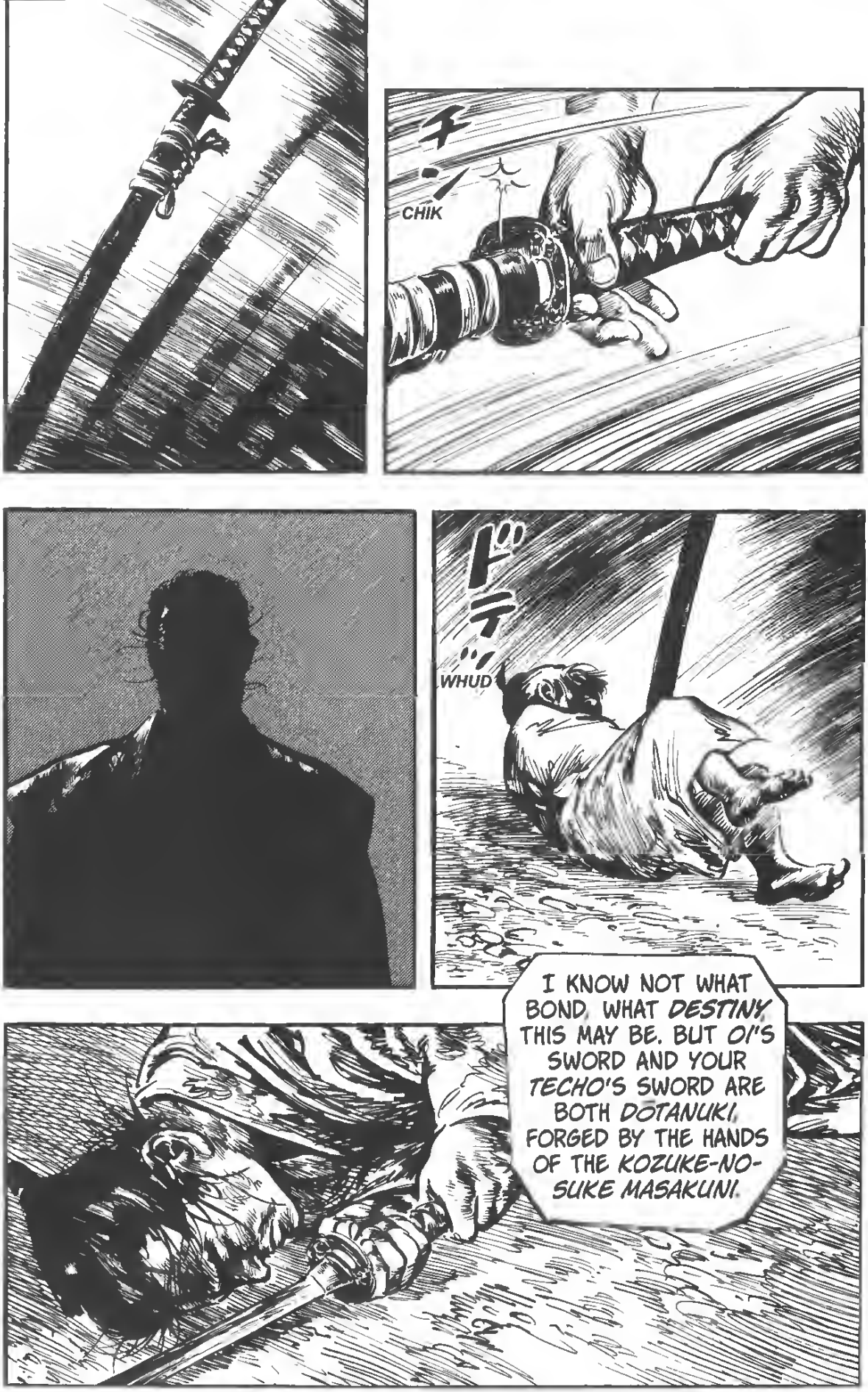
STAND HOLDING HIS SCABBARD IN BOTH HANDS!
BRACE YOUR LEGS, AND DO NOT QUAIL!

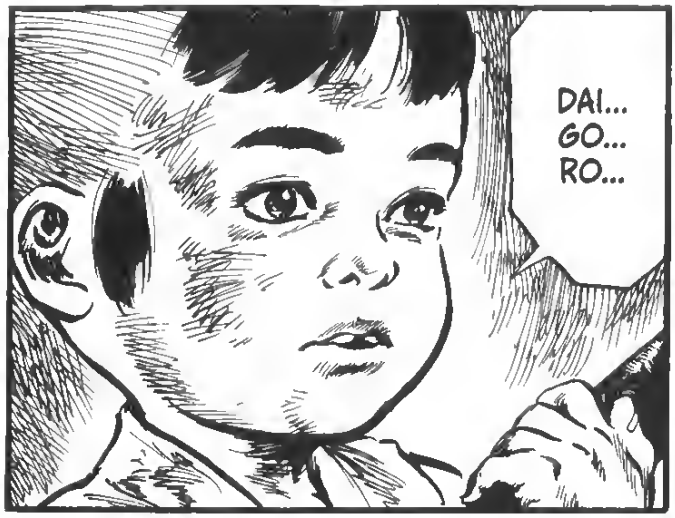
GRP


KTHAK

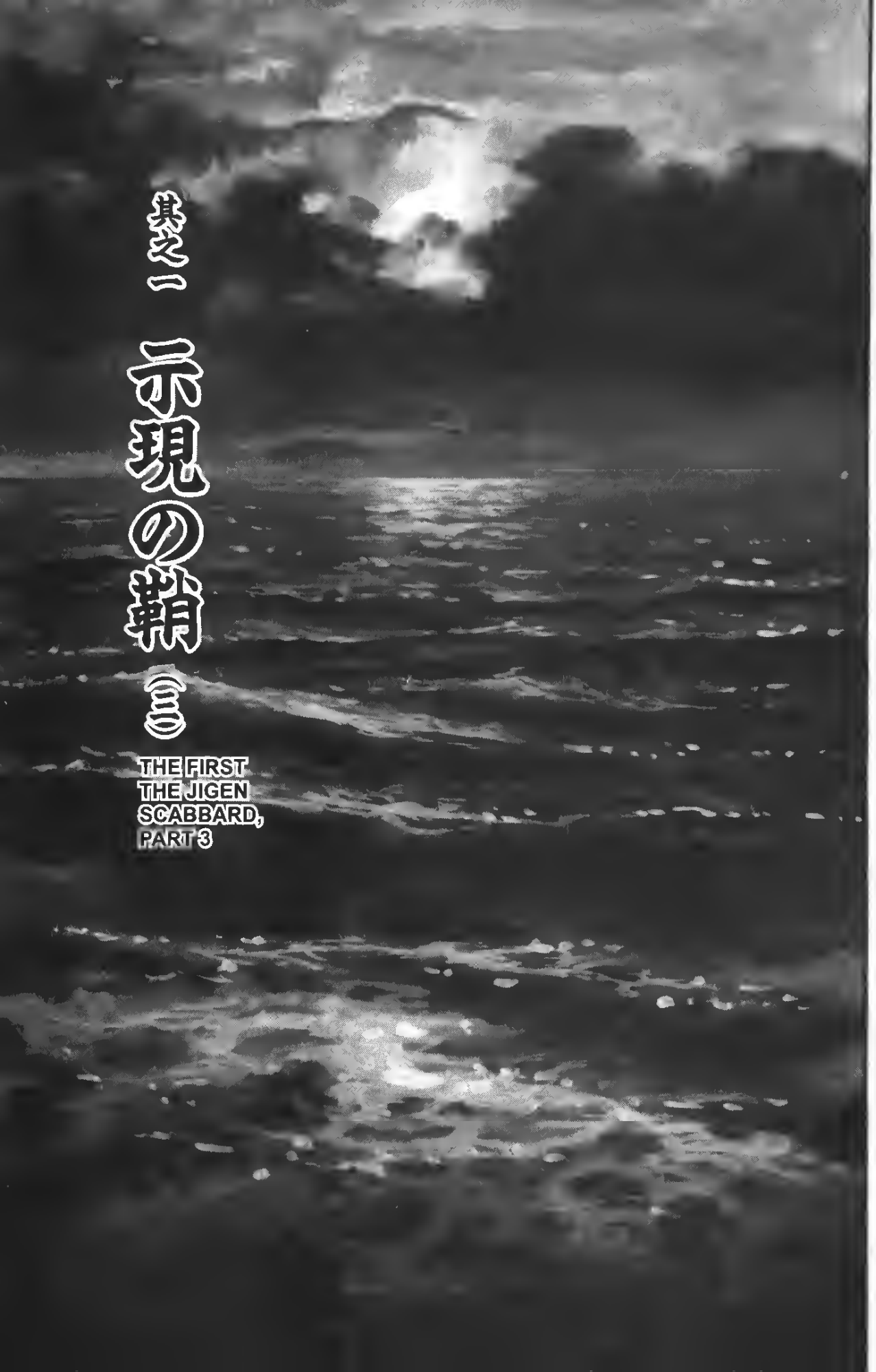
*SEE FOOTNOTES




CHIK
WHUD
I KNOW NOT WHAT BOND, WHAT *DESTINY*, THIS MAY BE. BUT *OI*'S SWORD AND YOUR *TECHO*'S SWORD ARE BOTH *DŌTANUKI*, FORGED BY THE HANDS OF THE *KOZUKE-NO-SUKE MASAKUNI*.


DAI...
GO...
RO...

YOUR
NAME
?!



其之一

示現の鞘（三）

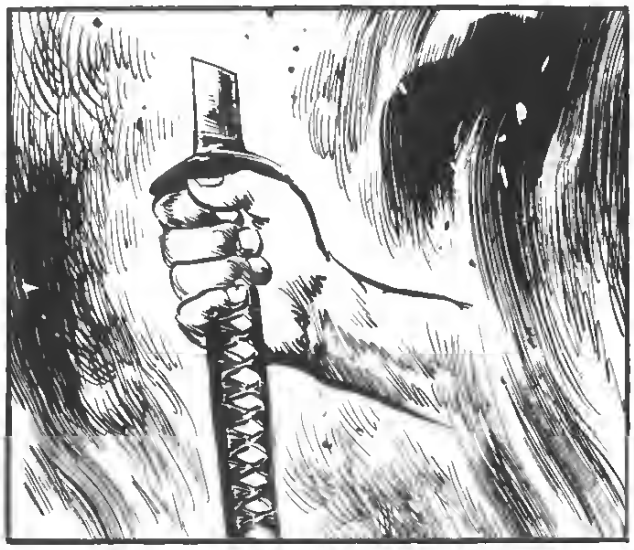
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 3

I SHALL CARE FOR THIS CHILD YOU LEAVE BEHIND. PLEASE REST IN PEACE.
I AM TŌGŌ SHIGE-KATA, SATSUMA JIGEN-RYŪ.

I CANNOT BURY YOU ON THIS SANDY STRAND. ALLOW ME TO RETURN YOU TO ASH. PLEASE PASS INTO NIRVANA.

I AM TŌGŌ SHIGEKATA SATSUMA JIGEN-RYŪ.
I CANNOT BURY YOU ON THIS SANDY STRAND. ALLOW ME TO RETURN YOU TO ASH. PLEASE PASS INTO NIRVANA.

PLEASE PASS INTO NIRVANA.
FWOOOSH
ブォー



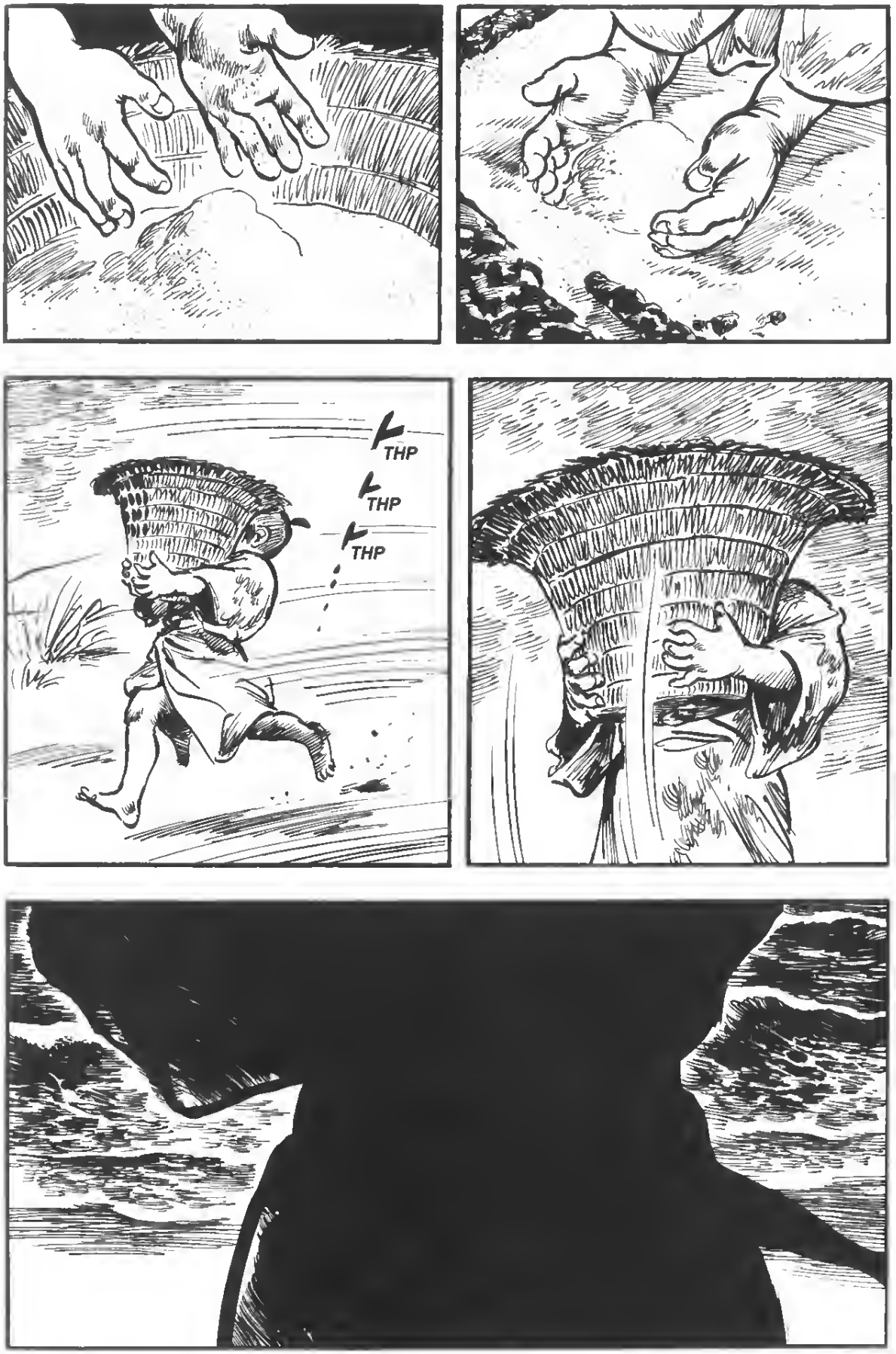
ROARRR
SPAKK
KSSH

"KANJISAI, THE ENLIGHTENED ONE, PRACTICING DEEPLY THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM, CLEARLY SAW THAT THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE EMPTY, THUS OVERCOMING SUFFERING AND MISFORTUNE. O SHARISHI..." *
ROOOAAARR

*SEE FOOTNOTES

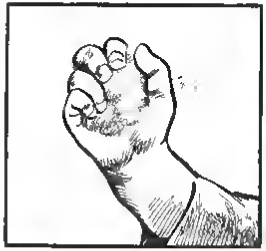
觀自在菩薩
行深般若波羅蜜多時
照見五蘊皆空
度一切苦厄
舍利子
"KANJISAI, THE ENLIGHTENED ONE PRACTICING DEEPLY THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM, CLEARLY SAW THAT THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS ARE EMPTY, THUS OVERCOMING SUFFERING AND MISFORTUNE.
O SHARISHI..."

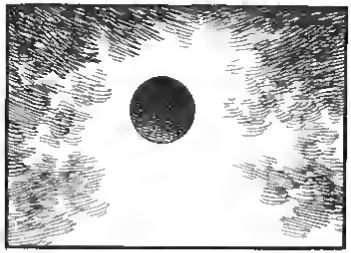
SRRSSH
ﾅﾟ!!

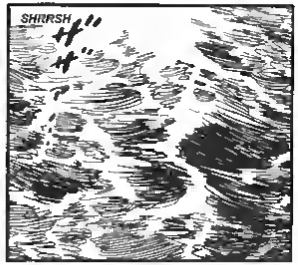

THP
THP
THP

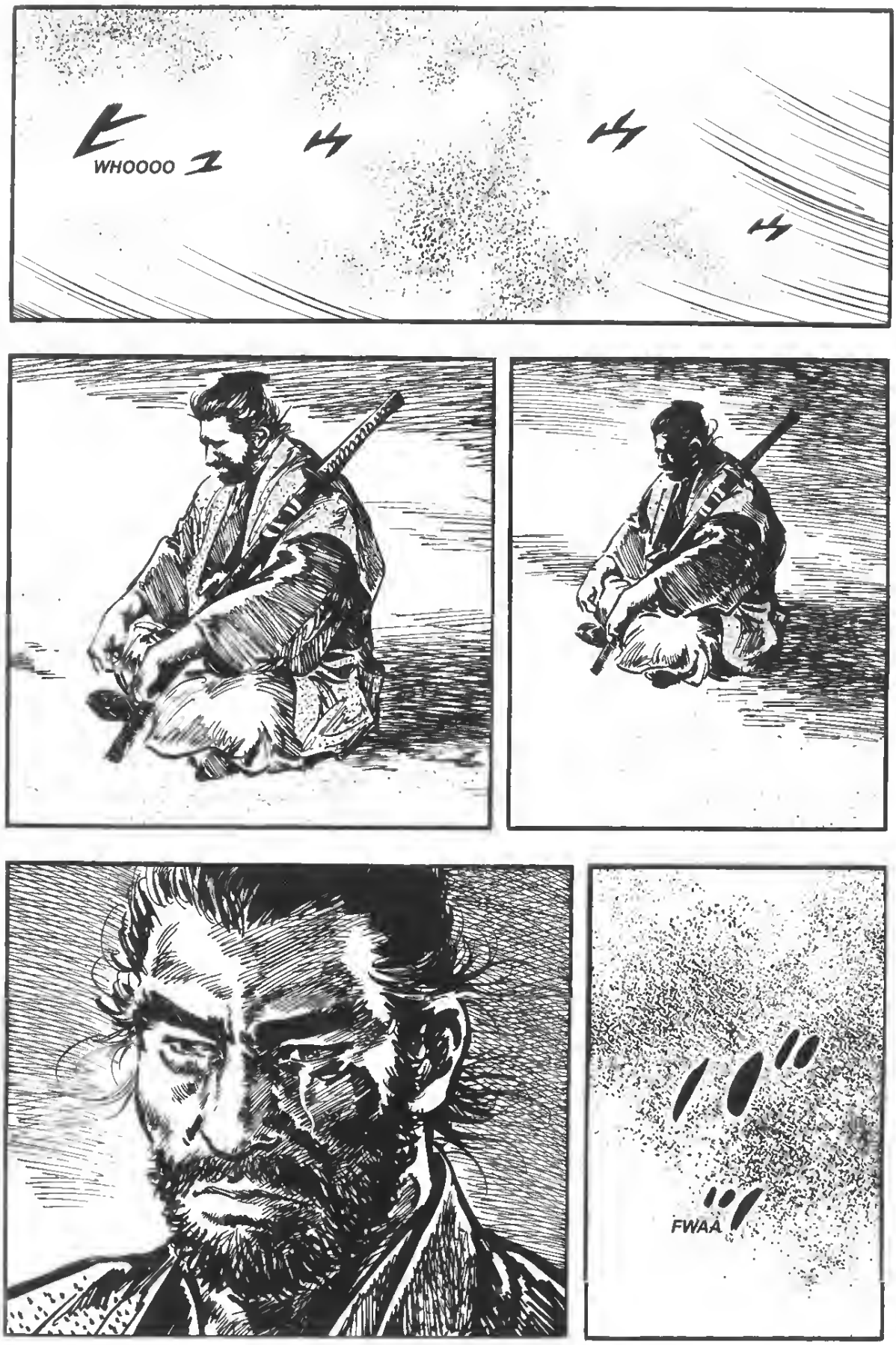
SHRRSHH
H''
H''
T.....

FWAAA





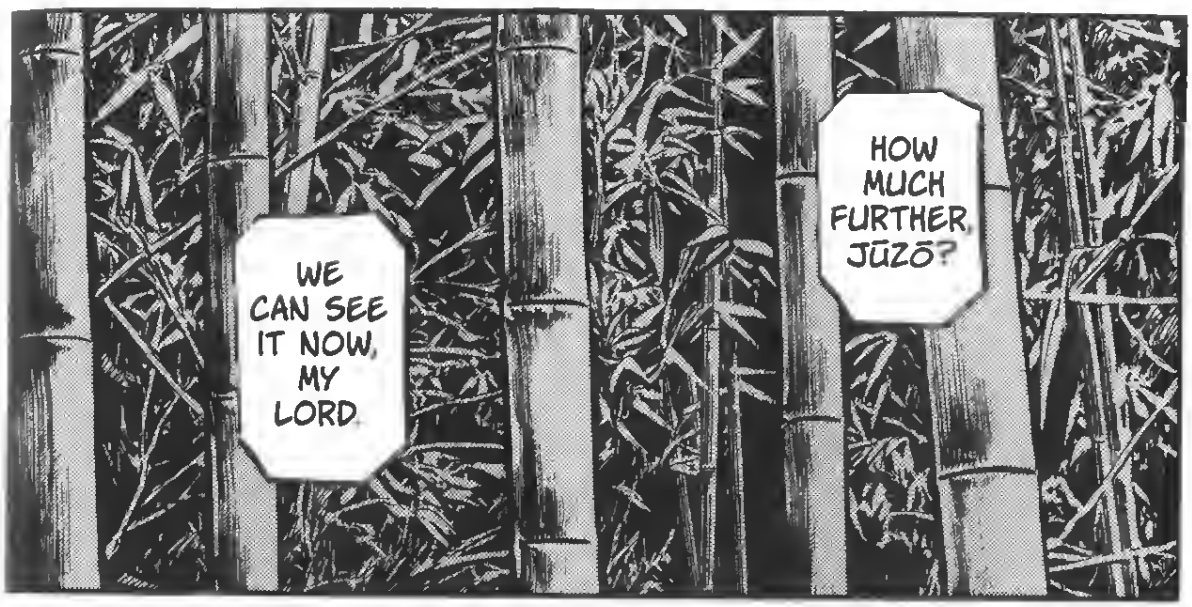

SHRRSH

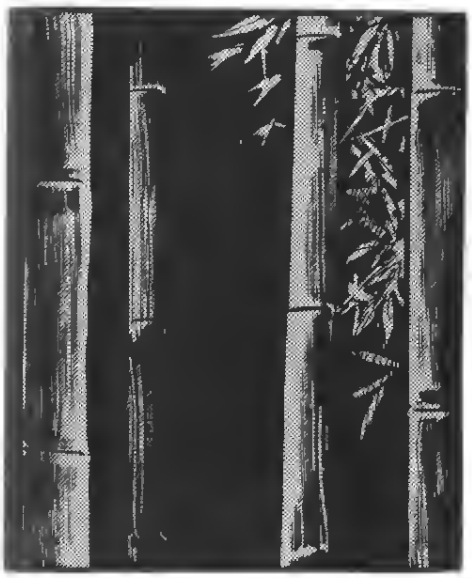

WHOOOO
FWAA

P...
PAA...
PAAAA...

ちゃ
¡PAPAAAAA!!!

其之一
示現の鞘（四）
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 4


WE CAN SEE IT NOW, MY LORD.
HOW MUCH FURTHER, JŪZŌ?

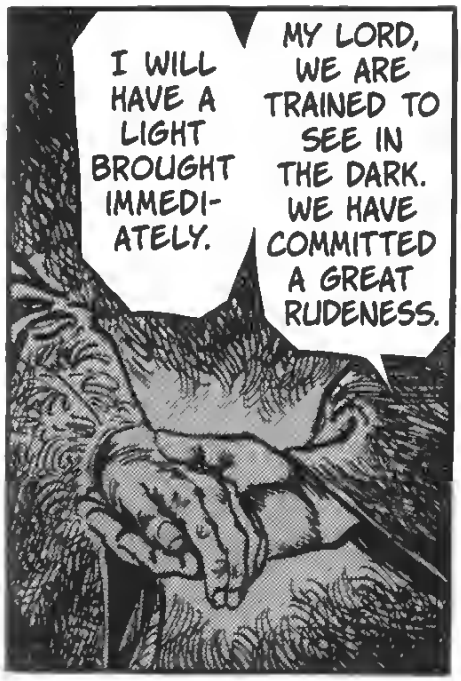


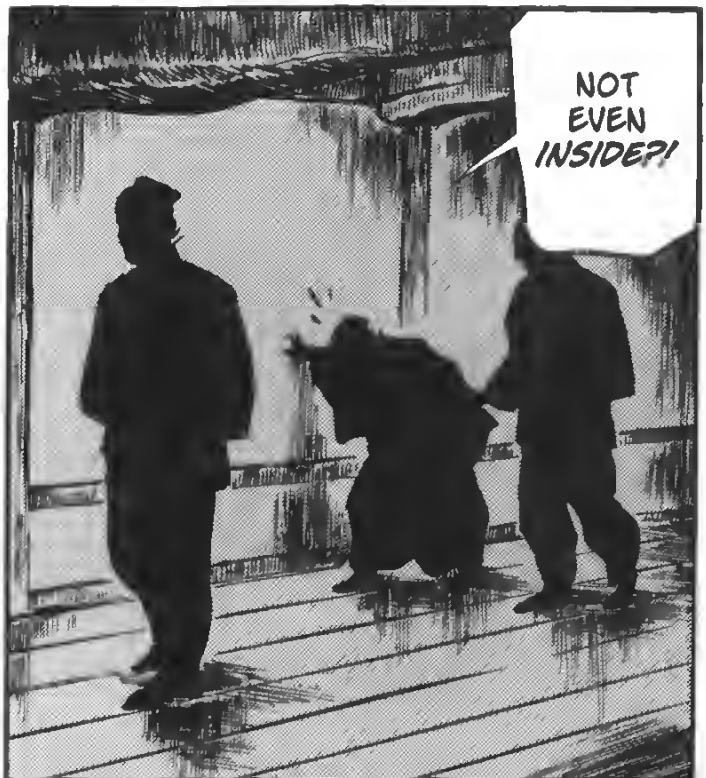
サ"
ワ
サ"
ワ

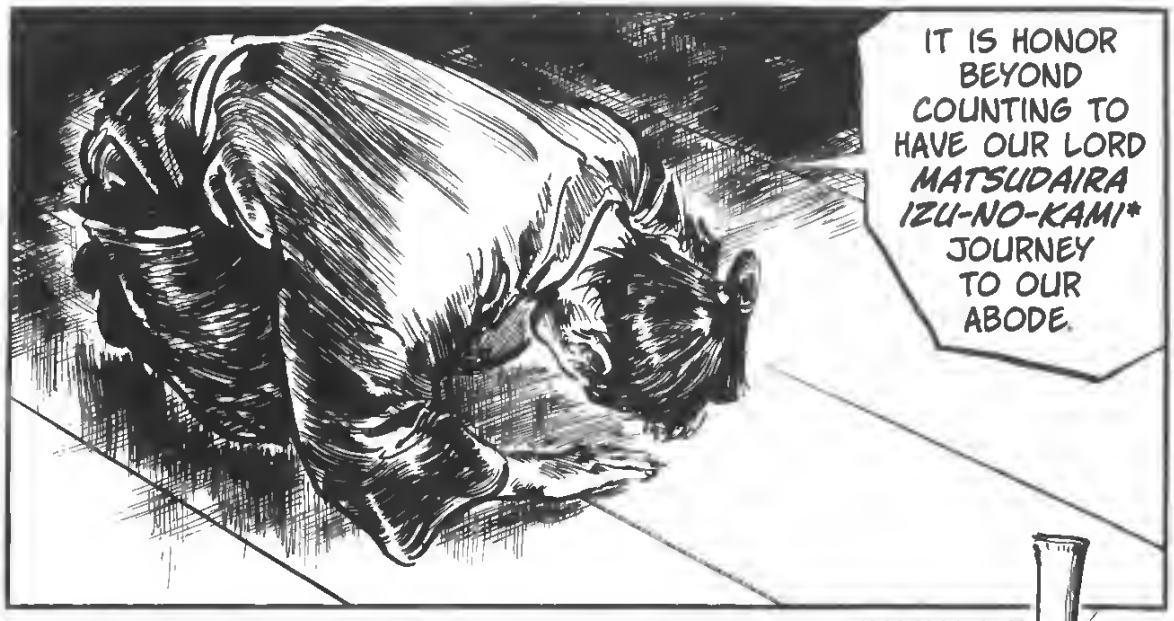
I CAN SEE NOTH-ING.

A BLACK VILLA IN THE BLACK OF *NIGHT*. NO WONDER I CAN'T SEE IT. WHY NOT LIGHT ONE CANDLE, AT LEAST?

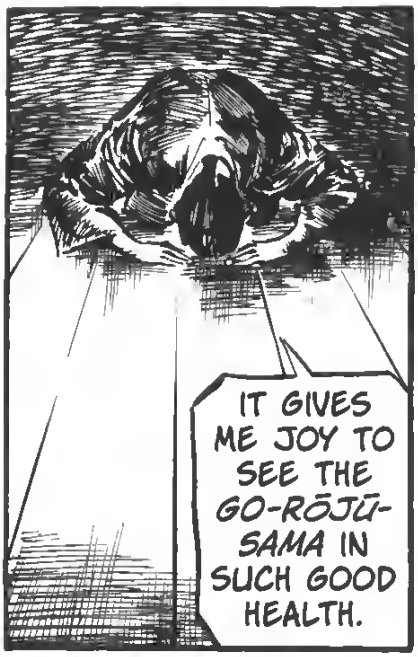
YES, YES, YES...
I CRAVE YOUR PATIENCE JUST A LITTLE LONGER.
MY LORD, THIS IS THE SECRET *YASHIKI* OF THE HATTORI CLAN.

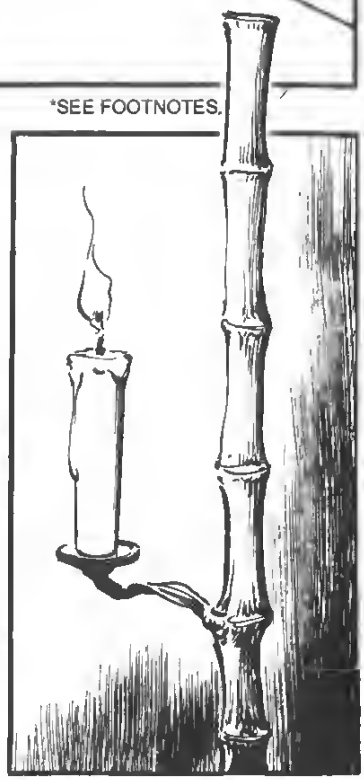

I WILL HAVE A LIGHT BROUGHT IMMEDI-ATELY.
MY LORD, WE ARE TRAINED TO SEE IN THE DARK. WE HAVE COMMITTED A GREAT RUDENESS.


NOT EVEN *INSIDE?!*

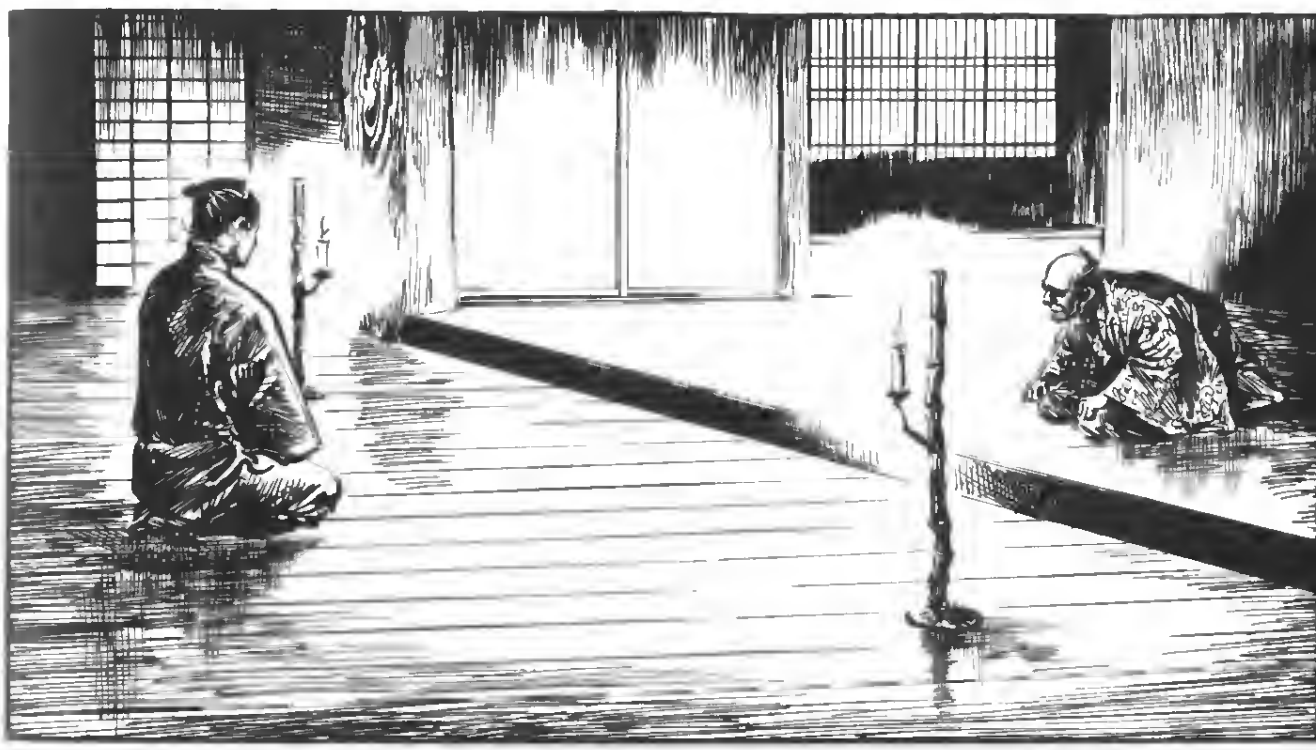


*SEE FOOTNOTES.

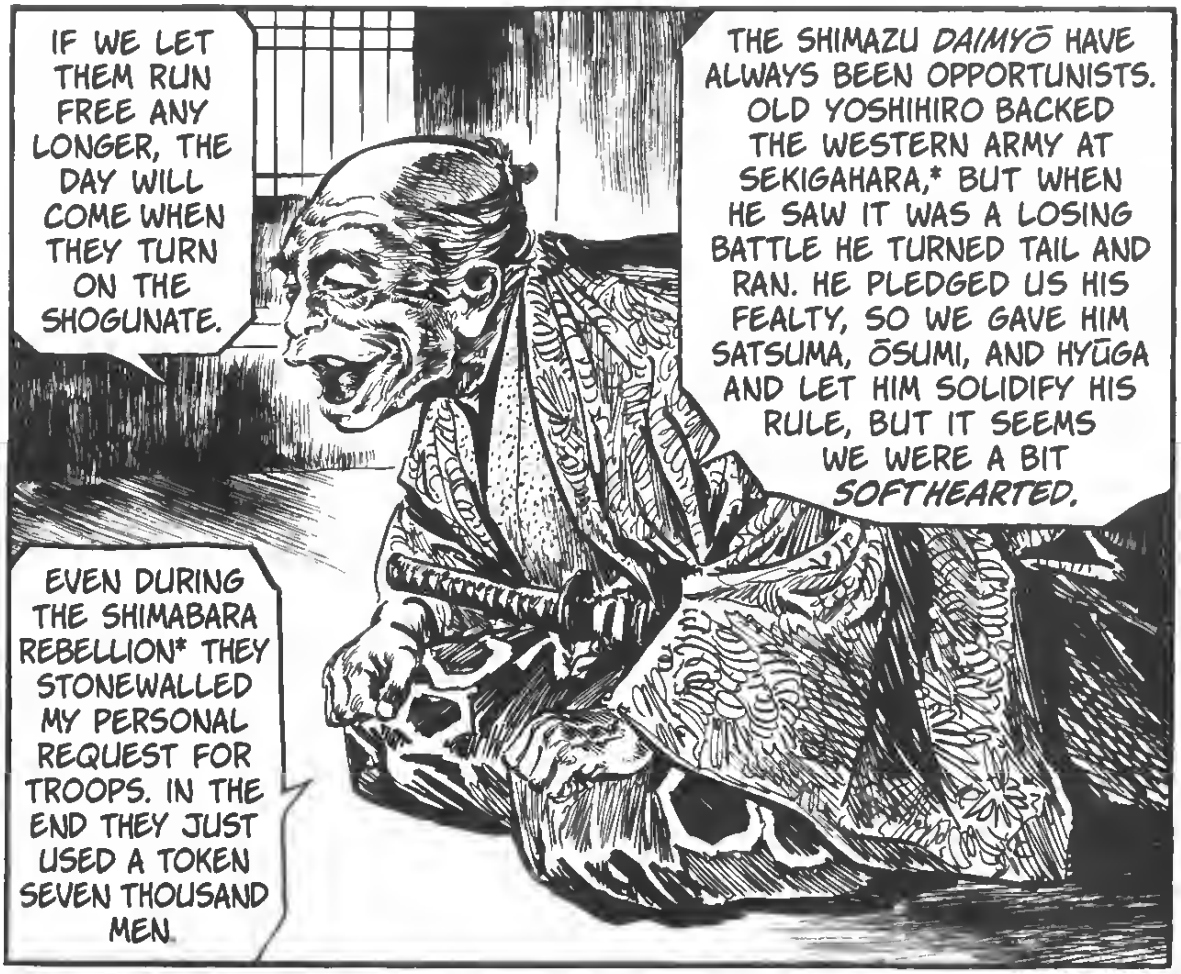




YOUR POWER IS UNCHALLENGED. IT MUST FEEL LIKE *SPRING*, ANZŌ.
NOW THAT THE YAGYŪ ASSASSINS AND THE *KŌGI KAISHAKUNIN* EXECUTOR WHO UPHELD OUR LORD THE *SHŌGUN* FROM THE SHADOWS HAVE PERISHED, ALL THAT REMAIN ARE *YOU*, OUR *TANSAKUNIN* SPIES.
ŌGAMI ITTŌ IS DEAD AND HIS ŌGAMI CLAN WITH HIM. YAGYŪ RETSUDŌ, GONE, THE *OMOTE*-YAGYŪ AND THE *URA*-YAGYŪ, ALL *FINISHED*.



*SEE FOOTNOTES


IF WE LET THEM RUN FREE ANY LONGER, THE DAY WILL COME WHEN THEY TURN ON THE SHOGUNATE.
THE SHIMAZU *DAIMYŌ* HAVE ALWAYS BEEN OPPORTUNISTS. OLD YOSHIHIRO BACKED THE WESTERN ARMY AT SEKIGAHARA,* BUT WHEN HE SAW IT WAS A LOSING BATTLE HE TURNED TAIL AND RAN. HE PLEDGED US HIS FEALTY, SO WE GAVE HIM SATSUMA, ŌSUMI, AND HYŪGA AND LET HIM SOLIDIFY HIS RULE, BUT IT SEEMS WE WERE A BIT *SOFTHEARTED.*
EVEN DURING THE SHIMABARA REBELLION* THEY STONEWALLED MY PERSONAL REQUEST FOR TROOPS. IN THE END THEY JUST USED A TOKEN SEVEN THOUSAND MEN.

*SEE FOOTNOTES.

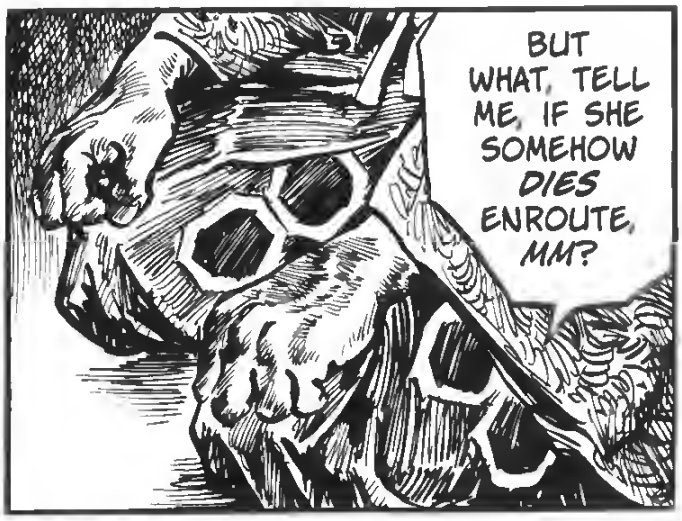
*SEE FOOTNOTES.

LISTEN, ANZŌ. SATSUMA IS WORTH 280,000 *KOKU* OF RICE. ŌSUMI, 180,000. HYŪGA, 130,000. THROW IN TANEGASHIMA, YAKUSHIMA, AND THE REST OF THEIR ISLANDS AND IT TOPS 700,000. THEY'RE A VAST DOMAIN.
WHAT I'M SAYING IS, THEY'LL GREASE THE SHOGUNATE'S FINANCES SPLENDIDLY.

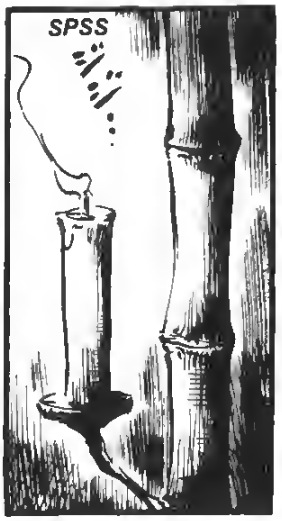
OUTSIDE THE SOUTH GATE OF THE TSURUMARU CASTLE KEEP IS A STAND OF SAGO PALMS ONE JŌ AND EIGHT SHAKU AROUND AND ABOUT EIGHT SHAKU TALL.

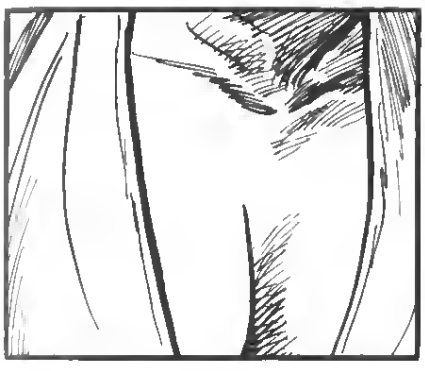
*SEE FOOTNOTES

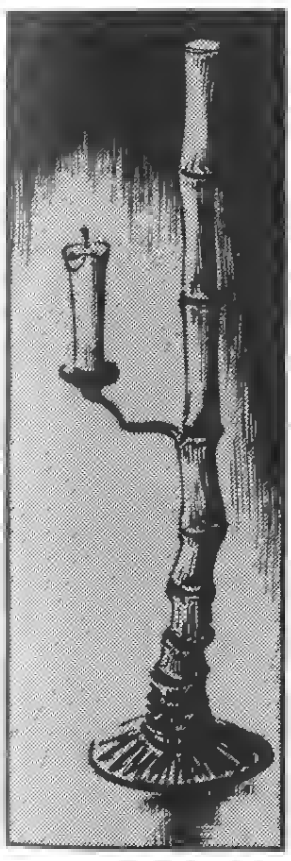
INDEED. THERE ARE MORE WAYS TO TAKE AN ENEMY THAN FORCE OF ARMS.
PRINCESS AYA IS BEING SENT THERE IN MARRIAGE, MY LORD?
HEH HEH HEH. PROOF PRINCESS AYA GOT THERE TO MARRY SHIMAZU.


BUT WHAT, TELL ME, IF SHE SOMEHOW *DIES* ENROUTE, *MM?*

THAT DUTY, ANZŌ, IS FOR THE *OTHER* YOU.

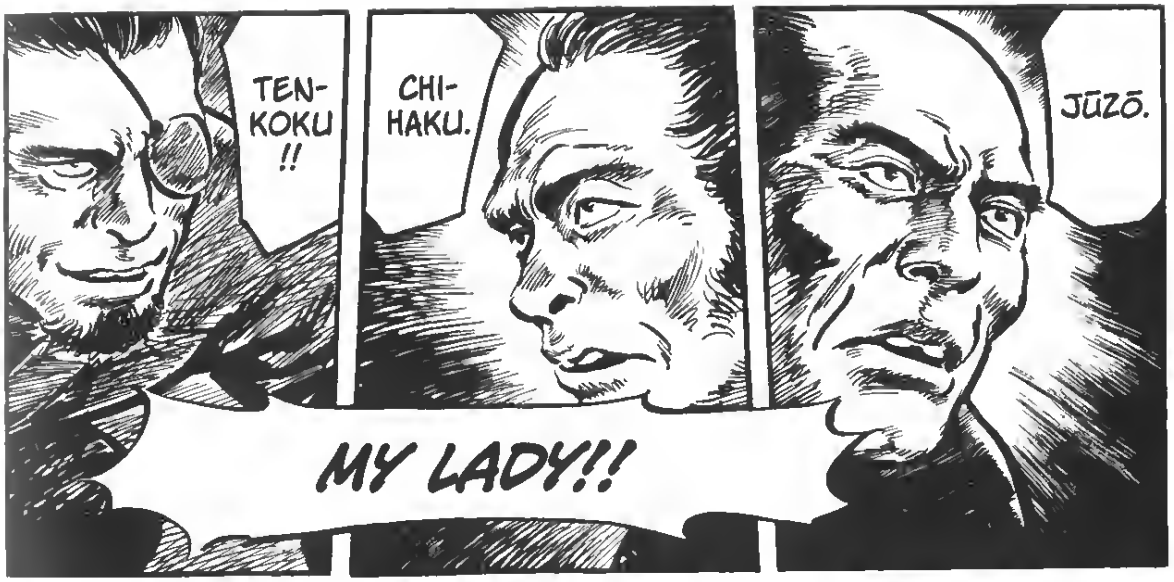

SPSS

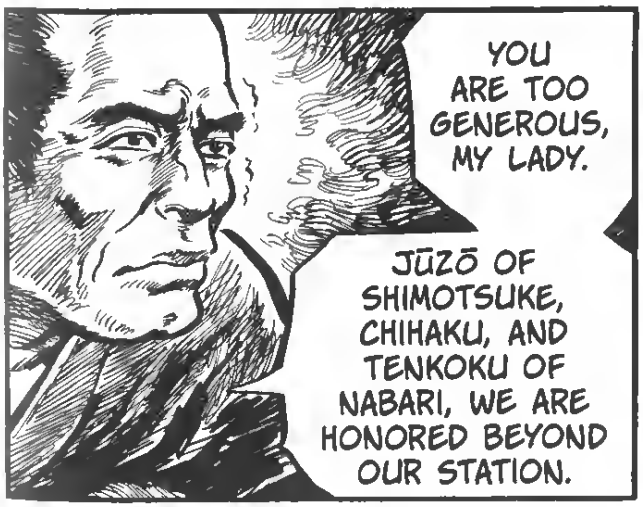




JŪZŌ.
MY LADY!
TAKEHIME-SAMA. MY HEART WAS PREPARED FROM THE MOMENT I GUIDED MATSUDAIRA-SAMA HERE.
IT HAS BECOME NECESSARY FOR YOU TO DIE.
EVEN WHEN THE SHŌGUN'S O-NIWABAN PENETRATE HIS HAN, THE DIALECT AND THE CUSTOMS THERE GIVE THEM AWAY. NEITHER NOW NOR IN DAYS PAST HAS A SINGLE ONE RETURNED ALIVE.
LORD SHIMAZU'S DIALECT IS IMPOSSIBLY HARD.
I AM DEEPLY GRATE-FUL.

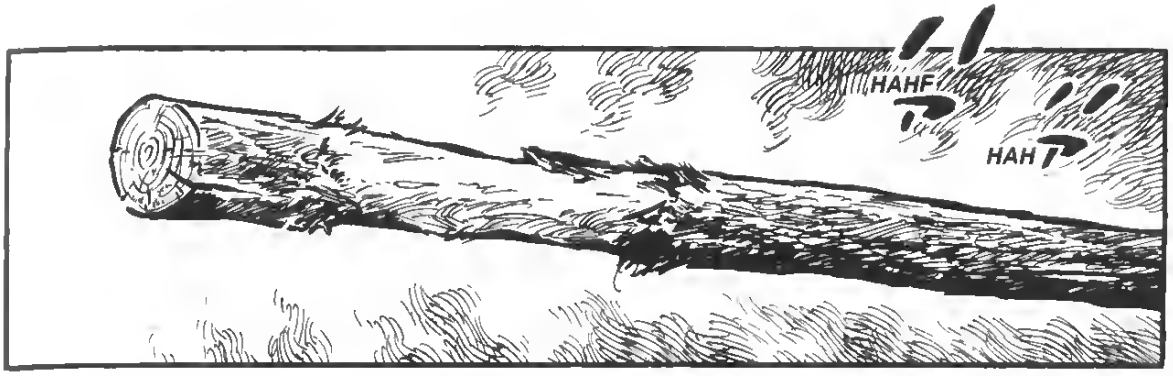
IF WE FAIL, IT WILL BE THE DEATH OF OUR HATTORI CLAN.
BUT THIS TIME I CAN BROOK NO FAILURE.


TEN-KOKU !!
CHI-HAKU.
JŪZŌ.
MY LADY!!


YOU ARE TOO GENEROUS, MY LADY.
JŪZŌ OF SHIMOTSUKE, CHIHAKU, AND TENKOKU OF NABARI, WE ARE HONORED BEYOND OUR STATION.

THROUGH YOUR *DEATHS*, OUR CLAN SHALL LIVE ANOTHER DAY, AND *FLOURISH*.

WE HAVE.
AND NOW. HAVE YOU *FOUND* ONE MIGHTY ENOUGH TO KILL EVEN YOU AND FORCE HIS WAY TO SHIMAZU?!
MOREOVER, HE IS BORN OF THAT LAND HIMSELF. HE IS WANDERING JAPAN EVEN NOW TO *TEST HIS SWORDSMANSHIP.*

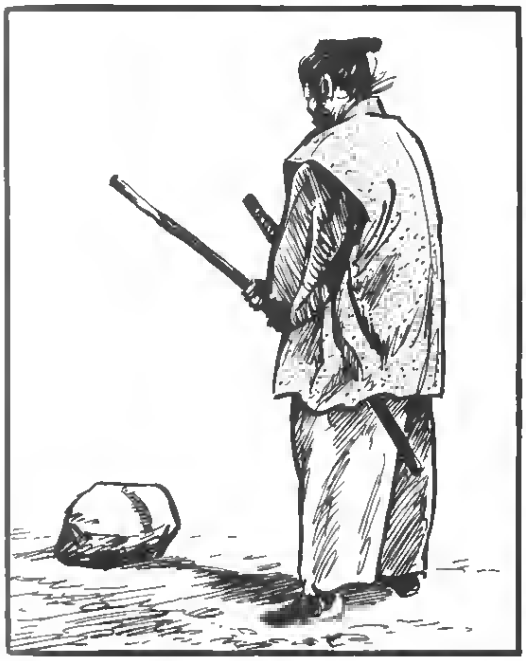
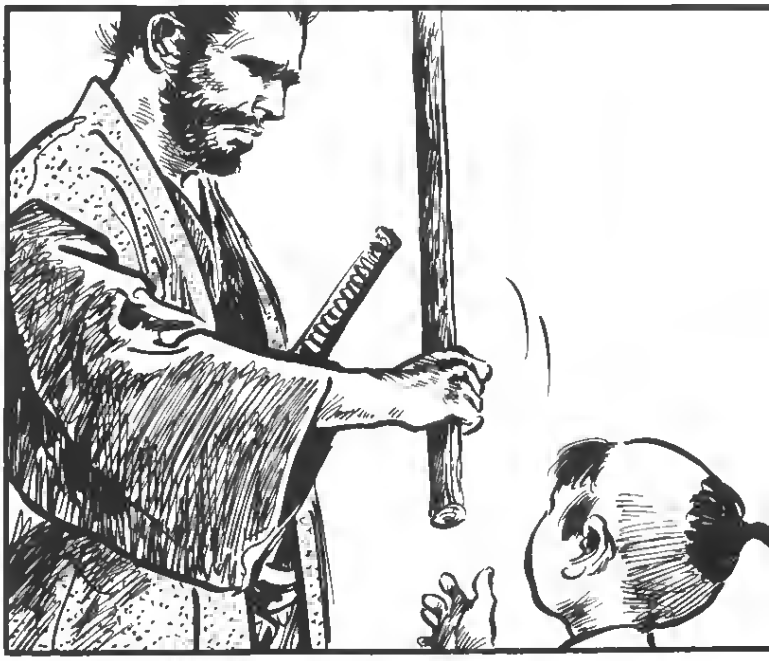

HAHF
HAH

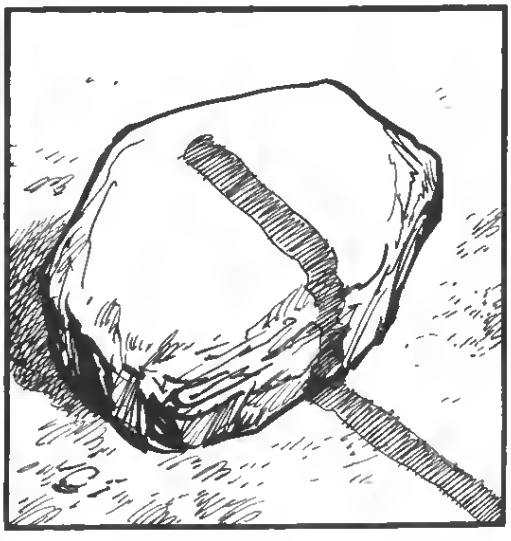
NGNN

KAKK

HAF
HHF

カロン
KTHAK
KTAK
IF YOU WANT TO EAT... SPLIT THE ROCK!
クチャ
クチャ
MNCH
CHMP
ゴ"
"
KLOK



ちぇすとおお!!
ガズ!!
ZANG
-CHESUTOOOOOO!!

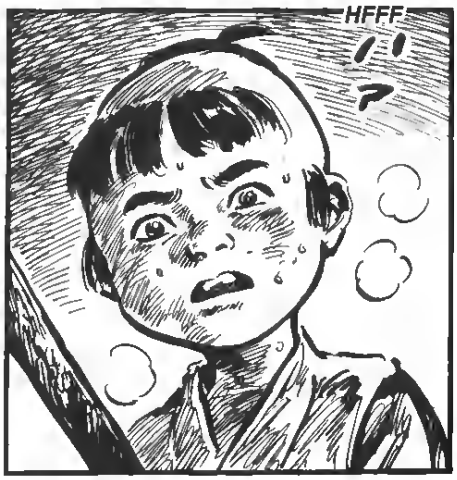
FLAP
FLAP
SEE. IT SPLITS.

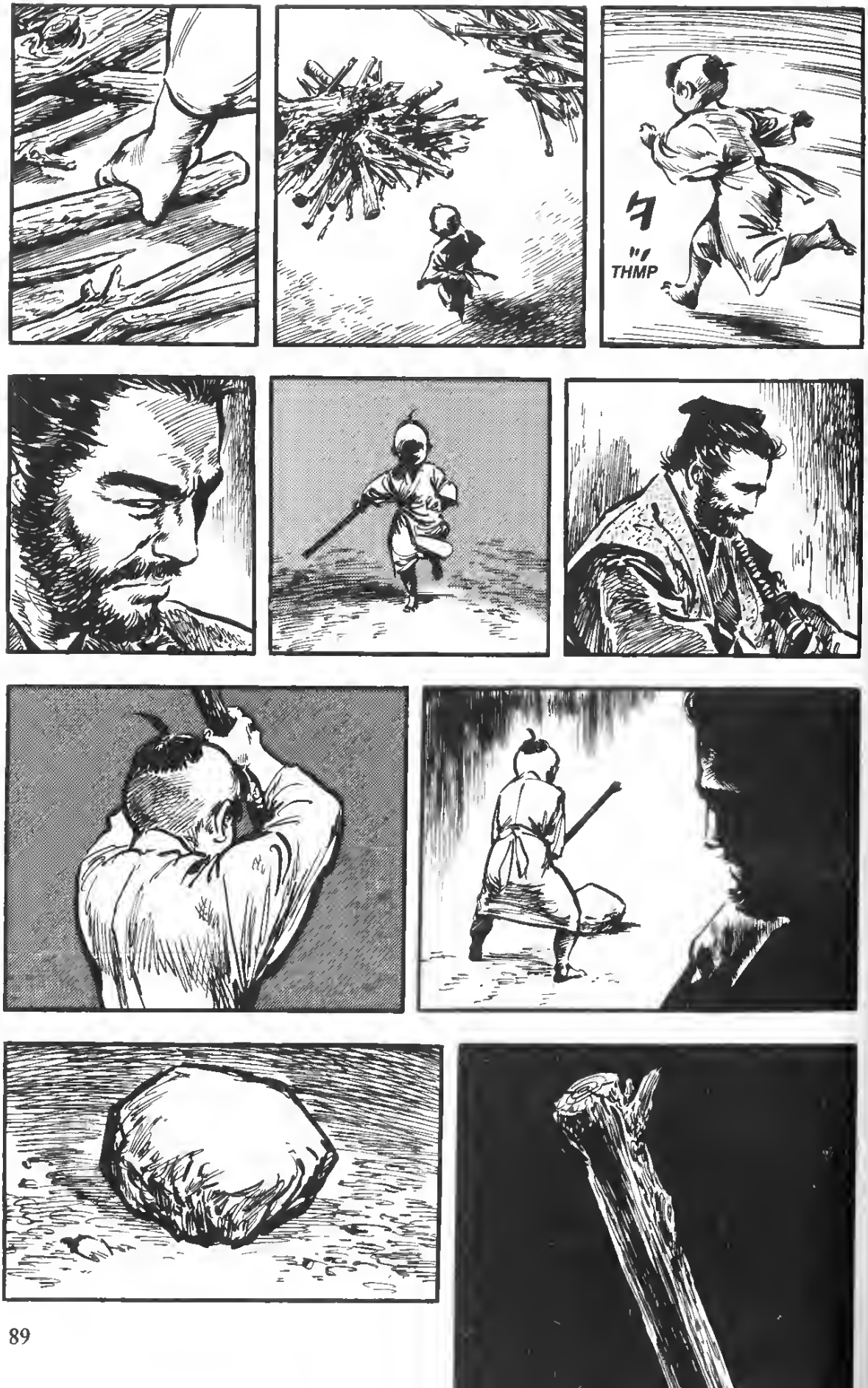
其之一
示現の鞘（五）
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 5

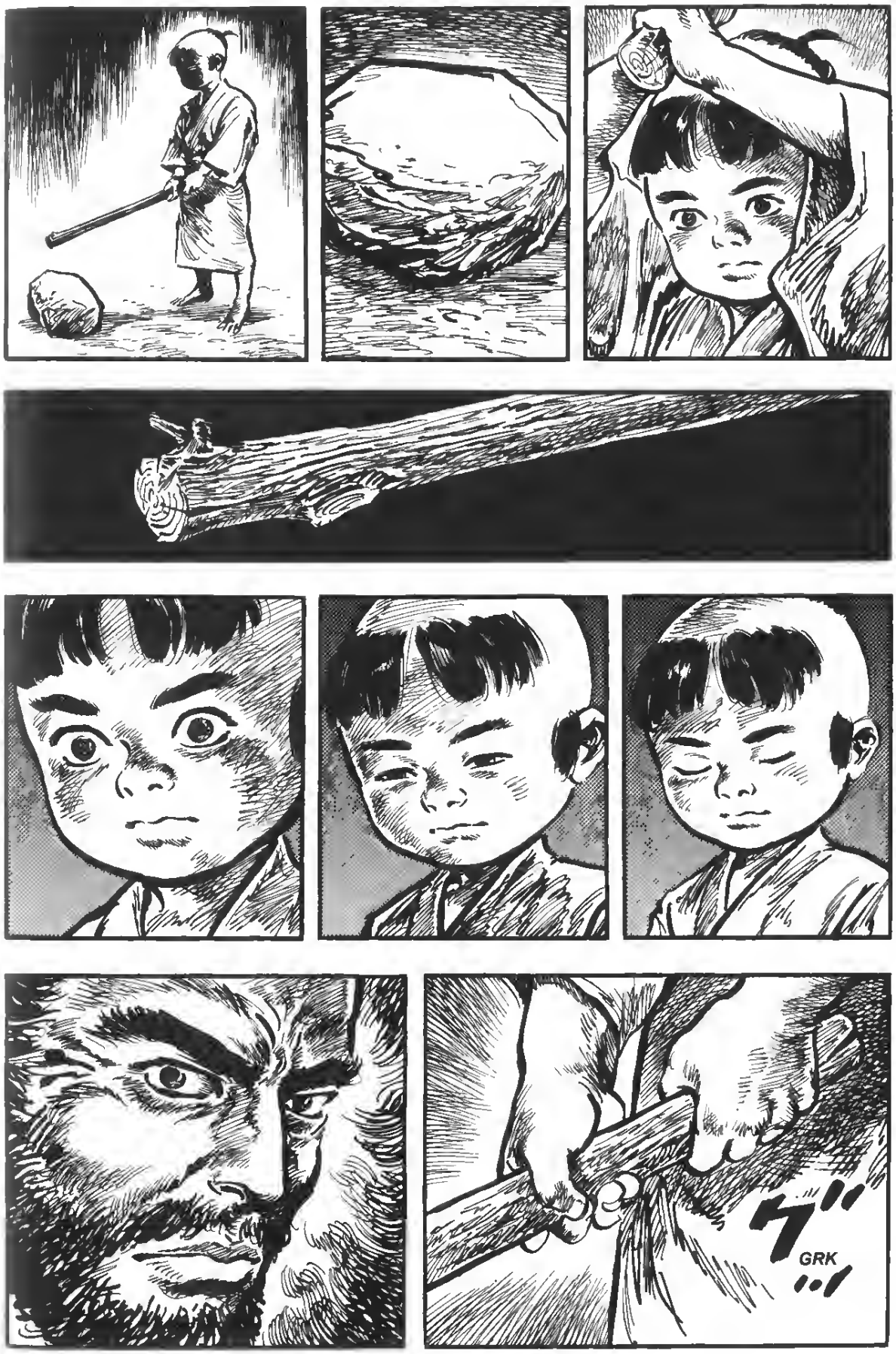
KLOK
WOK
WHOK
KRAK
WHSHH

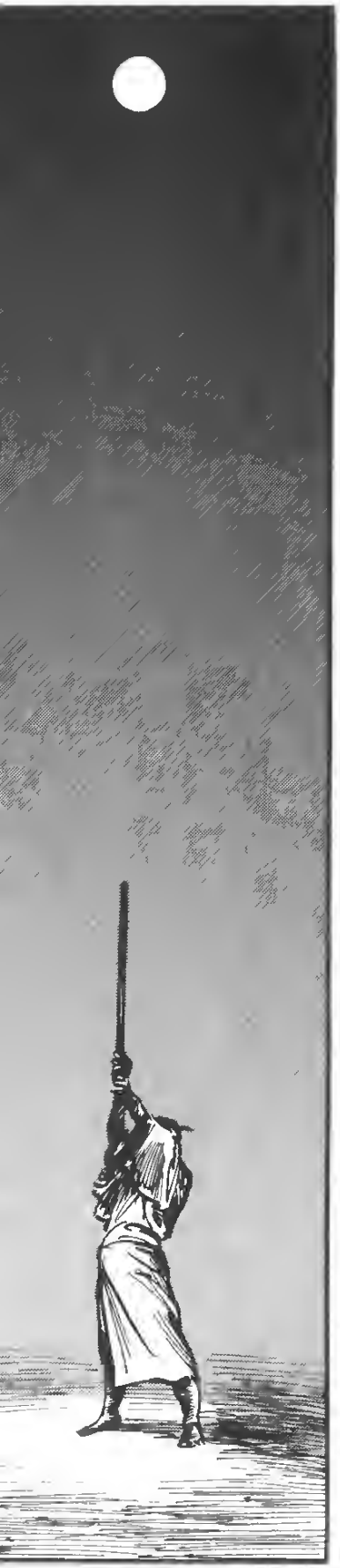
BRMBRM

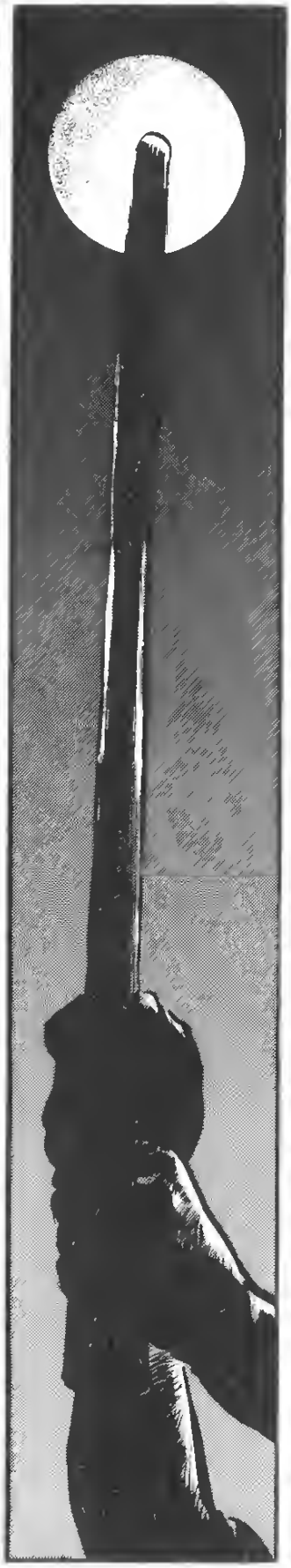
WHKK

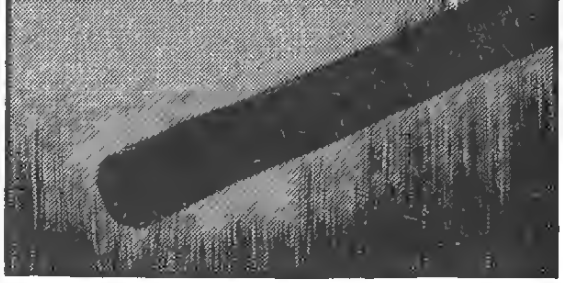

HFFF


THMP


GRK

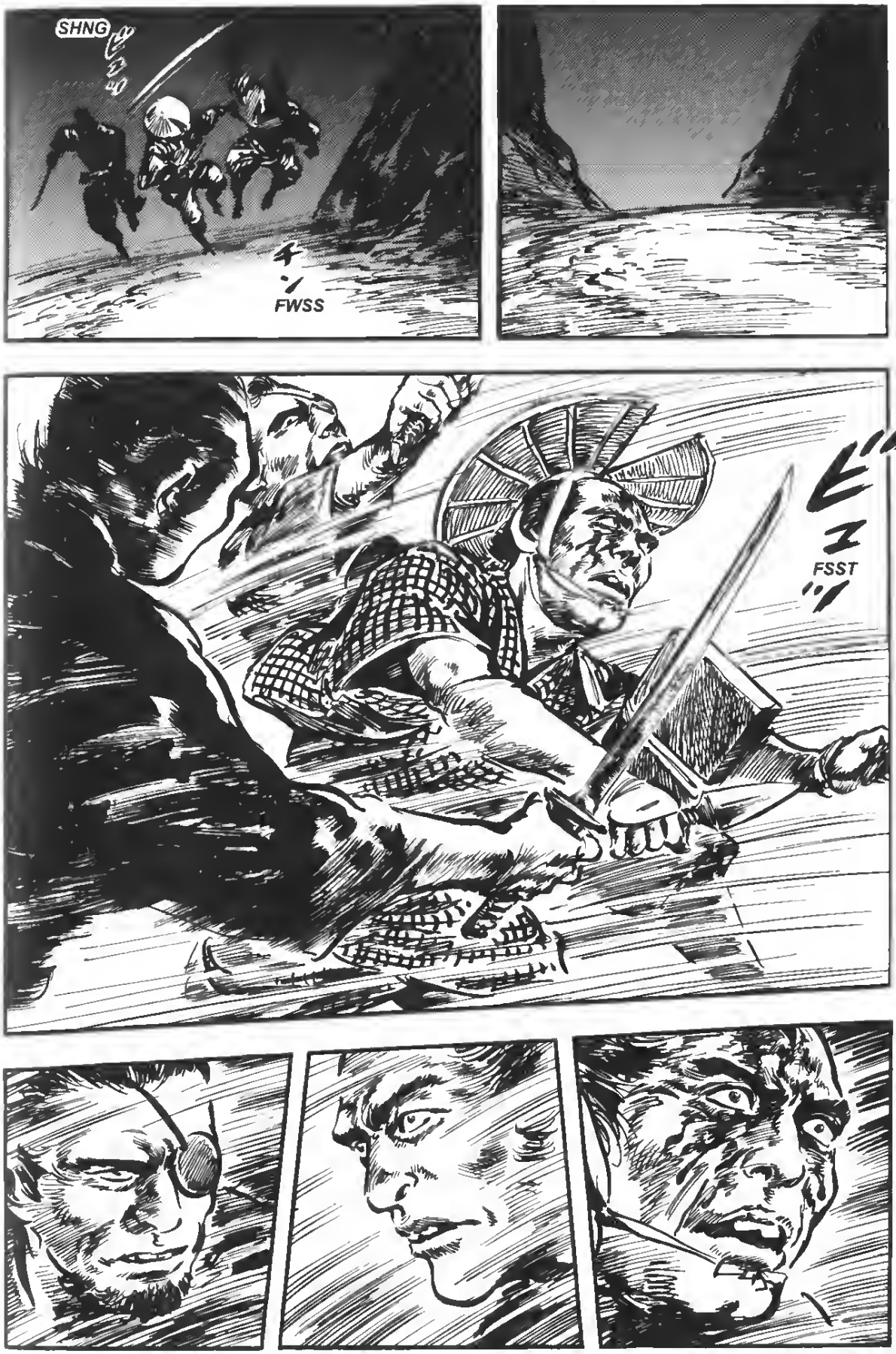






ZNGG
CHESUTOOOO!

GOOD, DAIGO-RO!


SHNG
FWSS
FSST

SKASSH
HSST
DAIGORO! STAY HERE!
MNCH
MNCH

CHESUTOOO!

THUKK
SKRRSH

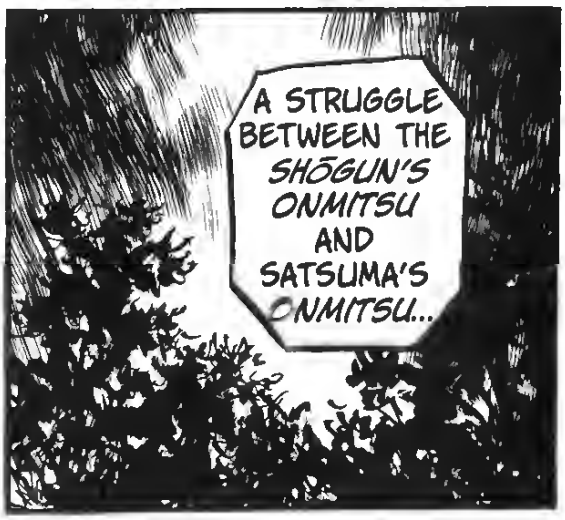
HRGK
BLOP
OI...AM ŌKUBO... KANSUKE... YOKOWARA TANSAKUNIN... FROM THE SATSUMA ESTATE IN EDO.*
T-TAKE THIS TO... SATSUMA...GIVE IT... TO THE YOKOWARA METSUKE, ARIMURA... SABUROBE...I BEG YOU...AT ALL COSTS...

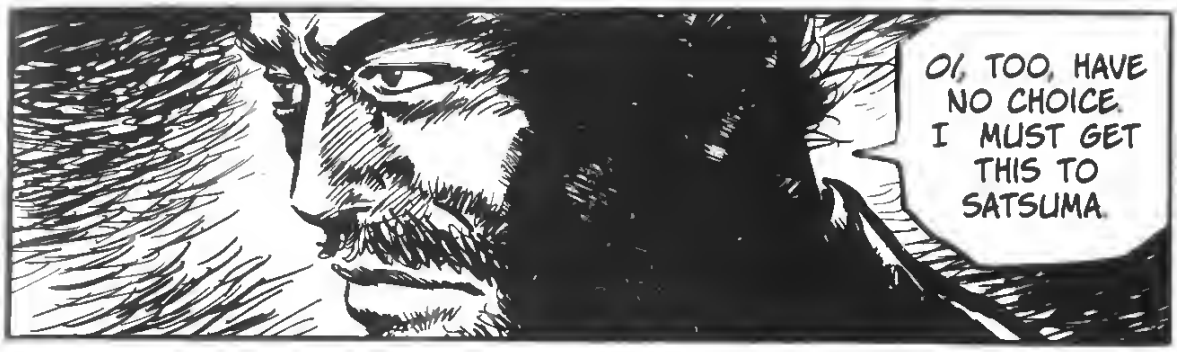
*SEE FOOTNOTES

I MUST... BEG ONE MORE... OF OHAN'S COMPAS-SION...
WRAP THIS HAIRPIN WITH MY HAIR AND...BURY IT...BENEATH THE SAGO PALMS OF TSURUMARU CASTLE...I BEG YOU...
L-L-LAST ME-MENTO... OF MY WIFE...

SPAK
SPKK
ROARR

ŌKUBO, WHATEVER HIS REAL NAME, MUST HAVE TRIED TO ESCAPE EDO WITH A VITAL SECRET AND WAS ATTACKED BY TWO OF THE SHŌGUN'S ONMITSU...


A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE SHŌGUN'S ONMITSU AND SATSUMA'S ONMITSU...


OI, TOO, HAVE NO CHOICE. I MUST GET THIS TO SATSUMA.

OHAN. YOU KEEP THIS.

THOSE BLISTERS!

LLK
LLK

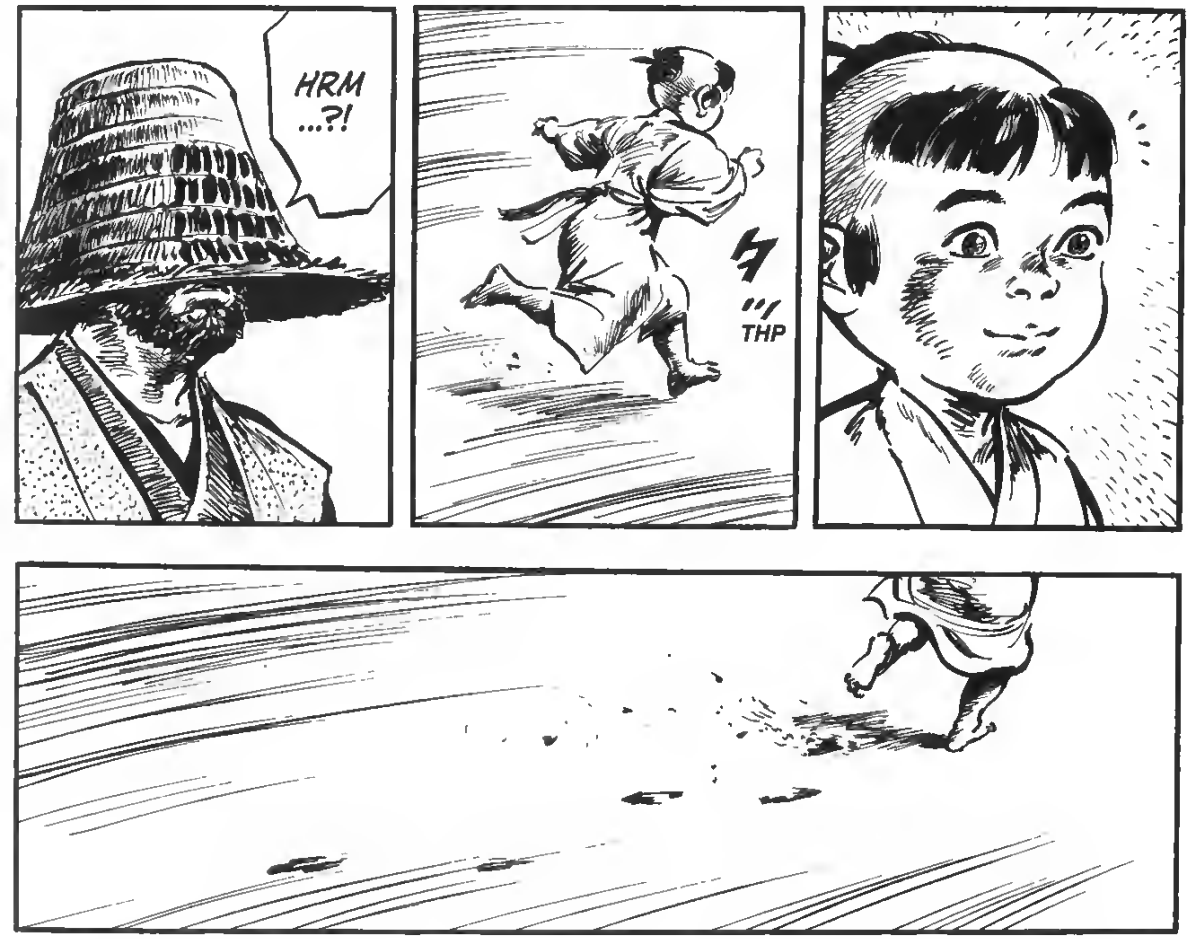
LLK
LLK

STAY THE COURSE, DAIGORO. UNTIL YOU CAN SPLIT THE ROCK EVERY TIME!

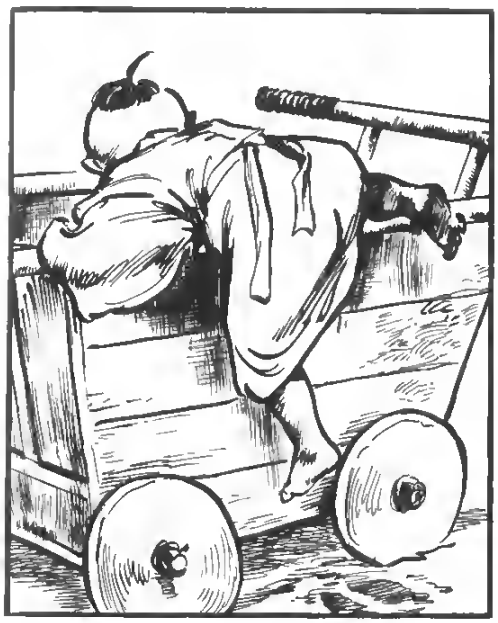
其之一

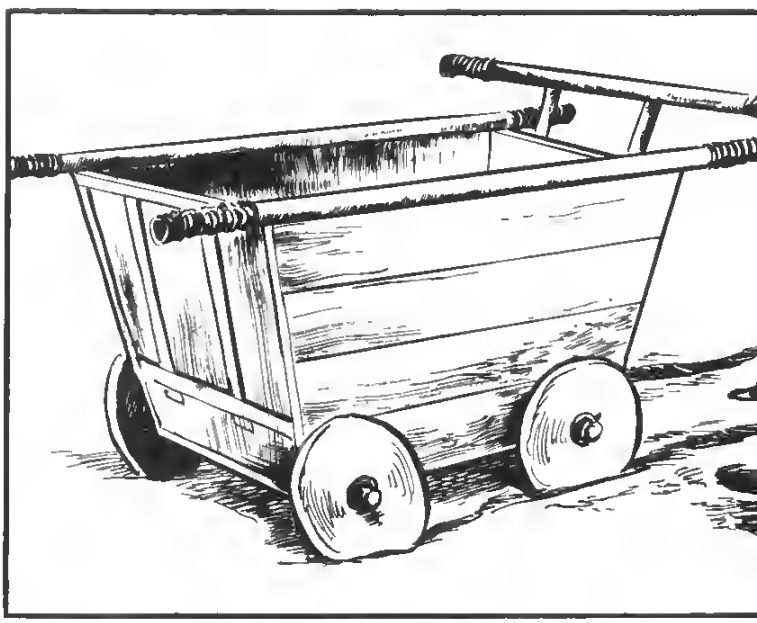
示現の鞘（六）

THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 6

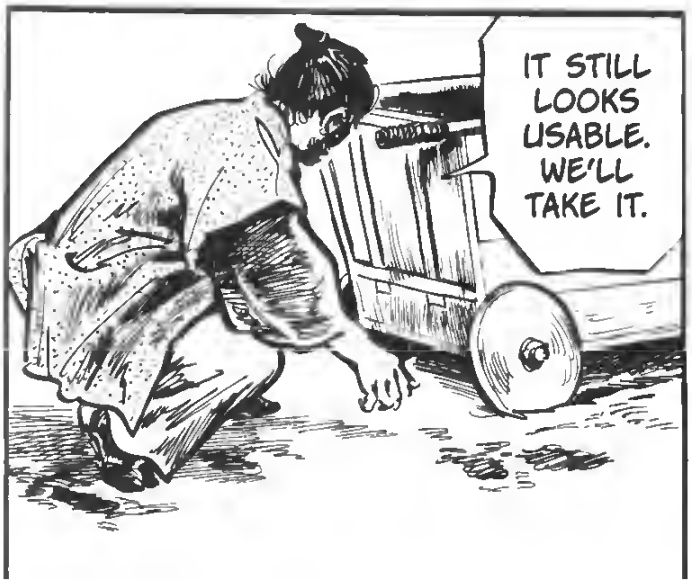

HRM
...?!
THP

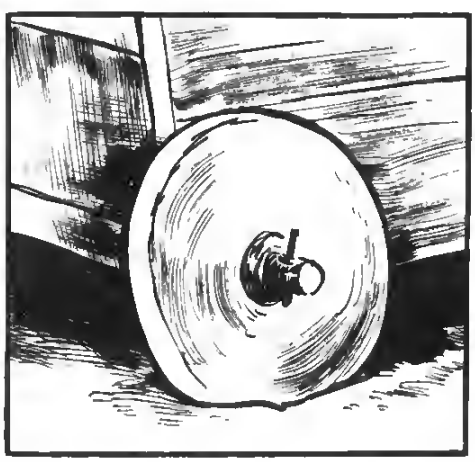
WHOSHHH
WSHHH





SO... THIS WAS OHAN'S CART?


IT STILL LOOKS USABLE. WE'LL TAKE IT.

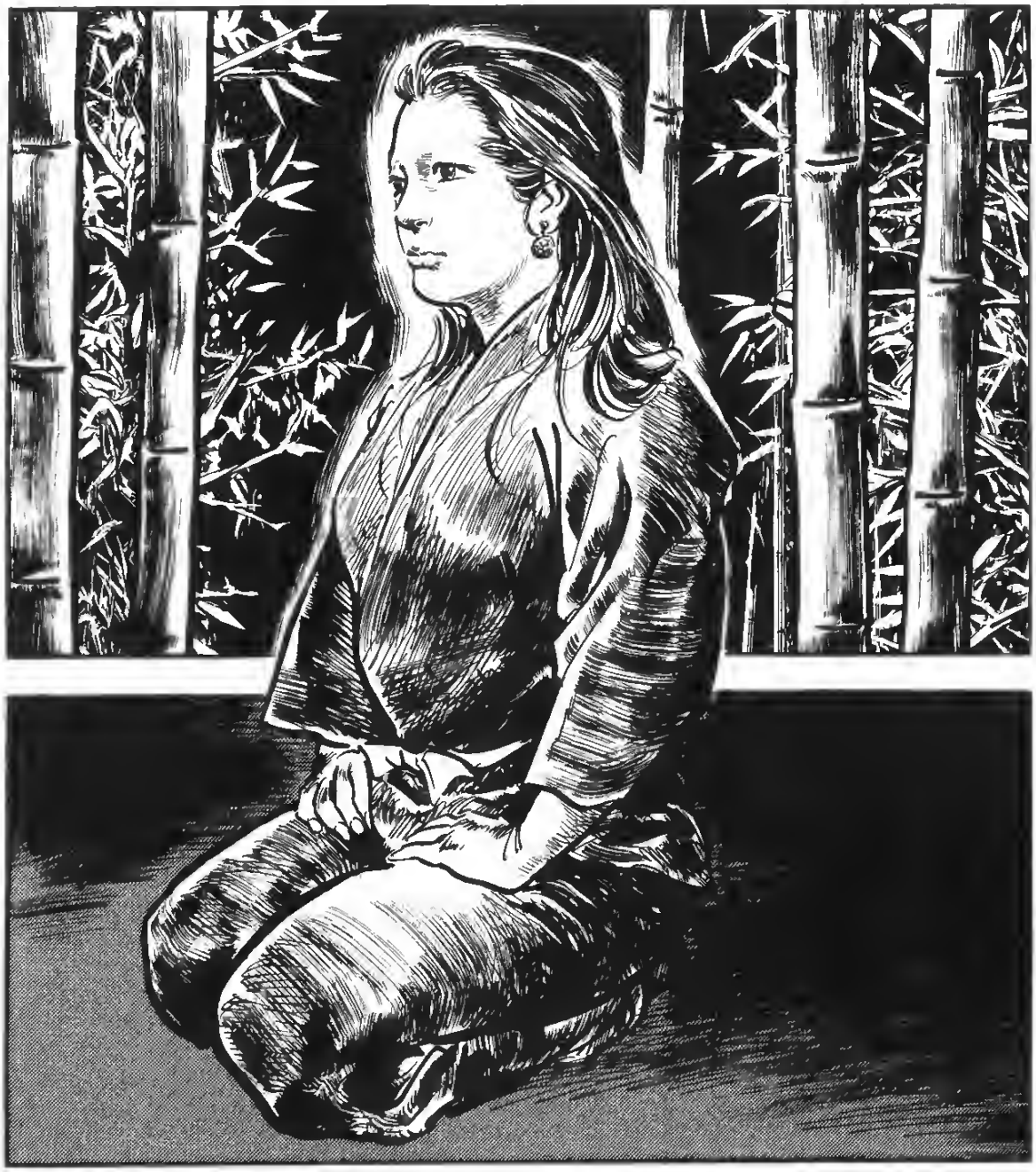


KLK
SHNNG

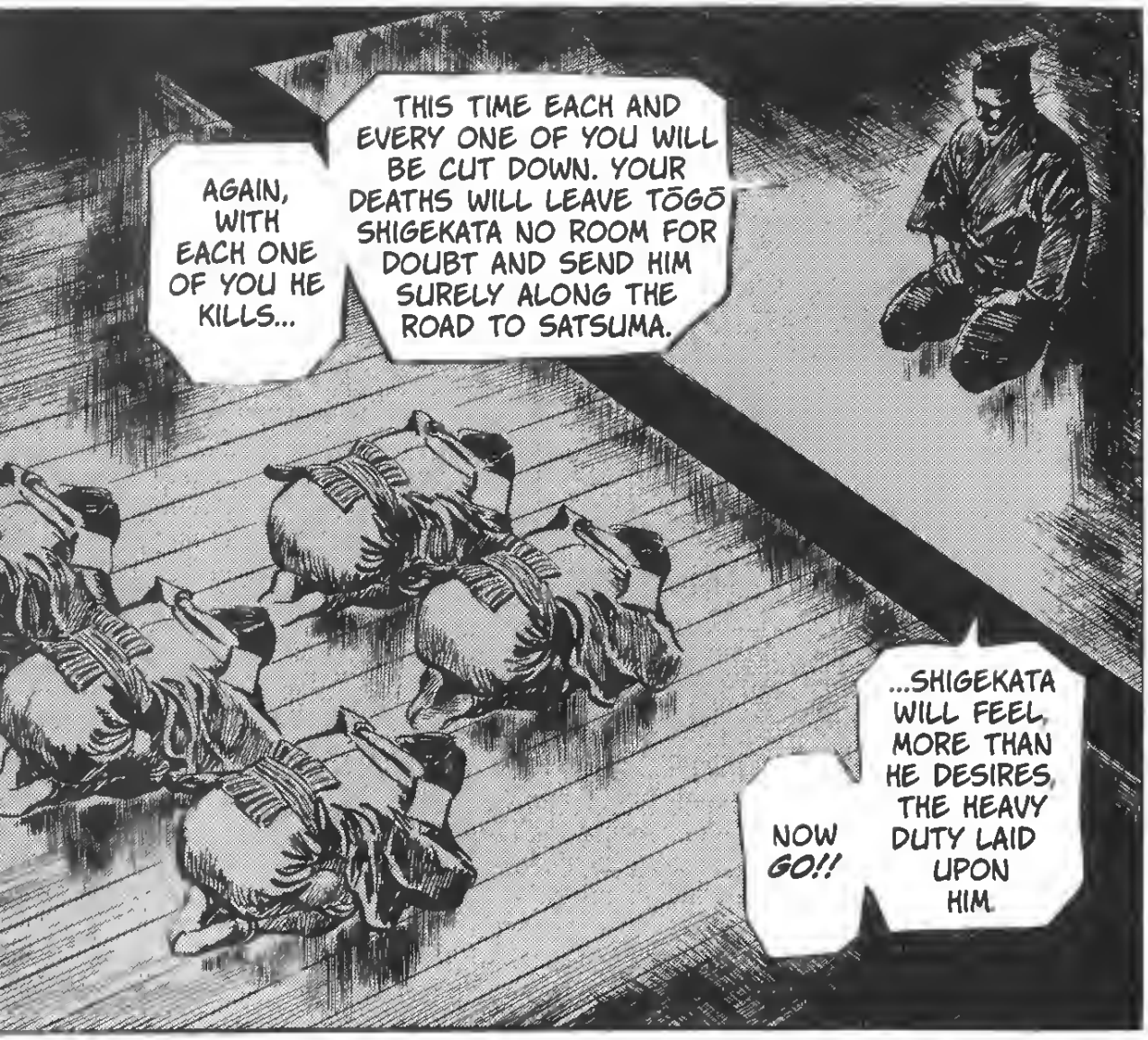
FST!!
SPAKK
SWOOSH

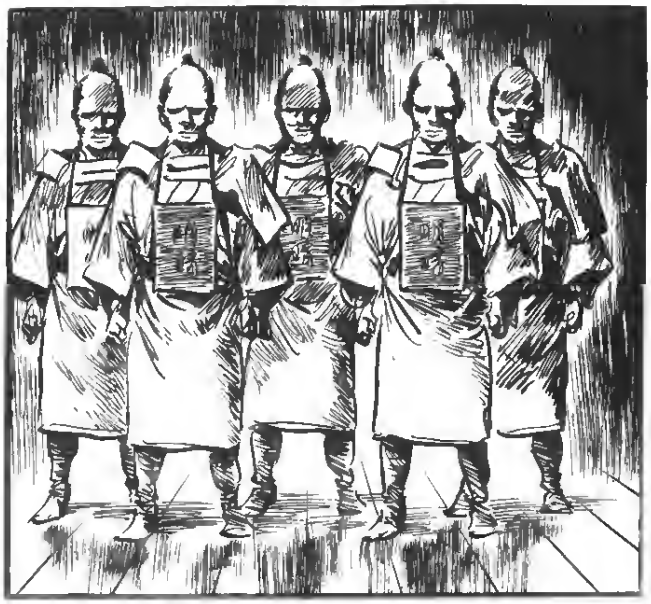
THUDD
LITTLE ONE!! YOU TESTED ME?!

SO OI CAN'T REPLACE YOUR TECHO IF OHAN CAN TAKE ME WITH A TRICK SPEAR?! IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?!
BWAH
HA
HA
HAH!
WELL DONE. WELL DONE!
HAH HAH HAH! SCARY BOY!



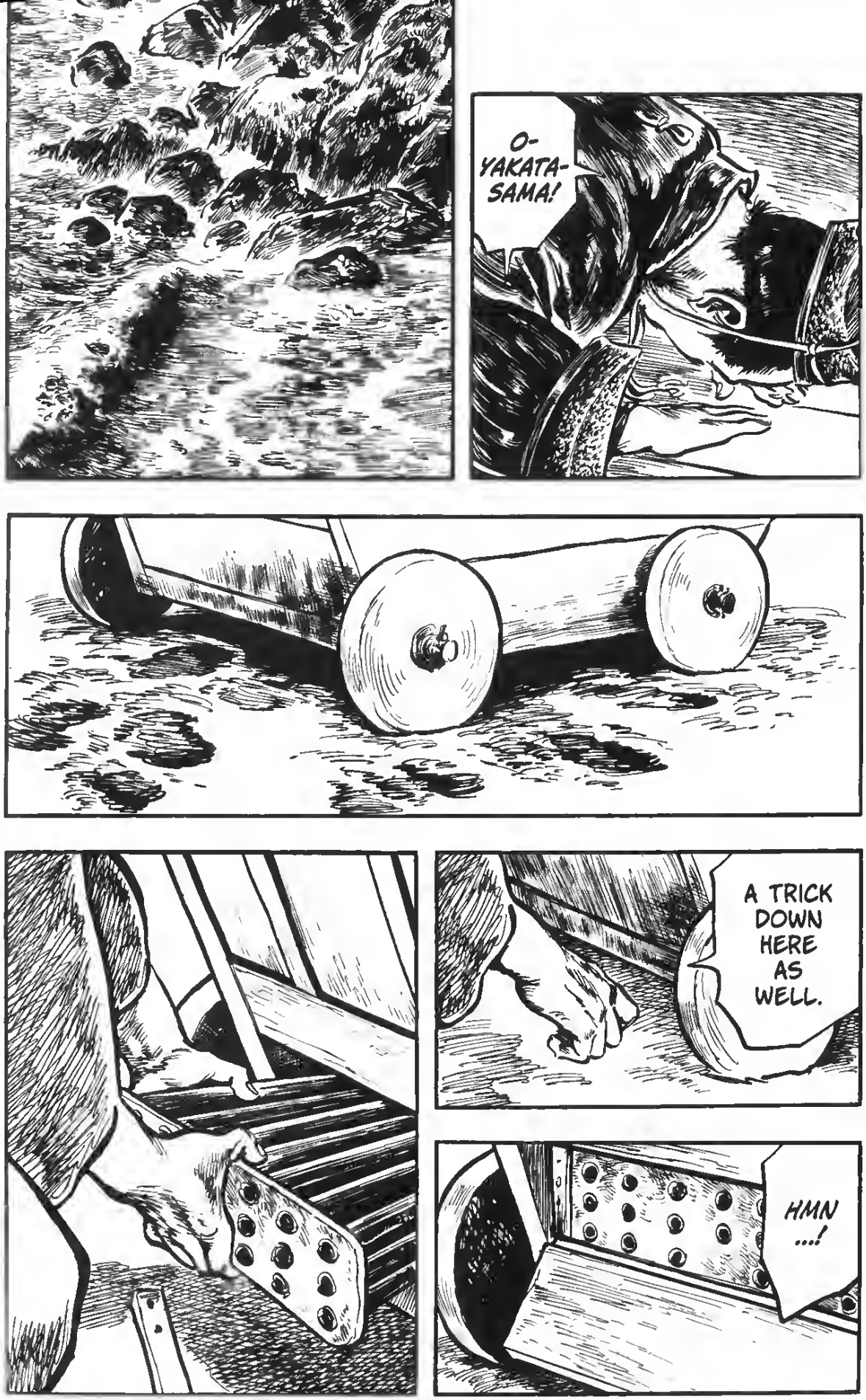
THE WAY OF *BUSHIDŌ* IS TO SEEK YOUR PLACE TO DIE. THE WAY OF THE *SHINOBI* IS TO ENDURE, UNTIL YOU LEAVE YOUR CORPSE *ROTTING* IN THE FIELDS.
TO BE A *SHINOBI* IS TO PLACE A BLADE UPON YOUR HEART, AND TO ENDURE.
BUSHIDŌ IS *JITSU*, THE TRUTH. BUT THE PATH OF THE *SHINOBI* IS *KYO*, UNTRUTH. FOR THIS REASON, WE SEEK NO GAIN, NO NAME.


AGAIN, WITH EACH ONE OF YOU HE KILLS...
THIS TIME EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU WILL BE CUT DOWN. YOUR DEATHS WILL LEAVE TŌGŌ SHIGEKATA NO ROOM FOR DOUBT AND SEND HIM SURELY ALONG THE ROAD TO SATSUMA.
NOW GO!!
...SHIGEKATA WILL FEEL MORE THAN HE DESIRES THE HEAVY DUTY LAID UPON HIM.

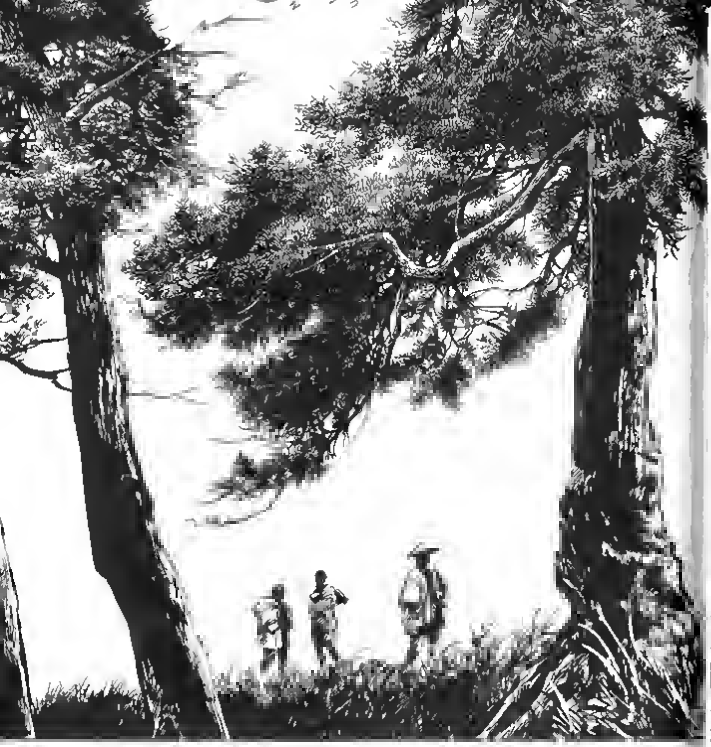


AN-ROKU!
YES, O-YAKATA-SAMA.
NANAE.
YES, O-YAKATA-SAMA.

I AM.
AND YOU, NANAE, FIFTEEN?
I HAVE TURNED SIXTEEN.
ANROKU, HOW OLD ARE YOU NOW?
TŌGŌ SHIGEKATA HAS WITH HIM A CHILD OF FOUR.
NO MATTER HOW ACCOMPLISHED A JIGEN-*RYŪ* MASTER HE MAY BE, HIS SKILLS WILL BE STUNTED SO LONG AS HE PROTECTS AND WATCHES AFTER THE BOY.
IF ONE OF US SHOULD *KILL* SHIGEKATA BY ACCIDENT, OUR PLANS ARE DUST.
OUR PEOPLE WILL ATTACK WITH THE FURY OF THE DEAD.
IF THEY HOLD BACK IN THE SLIGHTEST, HE'LL READ THE RUSE.
...KILL THE CHILD!
SO FOR SHIGEKATA TO WIELD HIS BLADE IN FULL, WE MUST *TAKE* THIS CHILD THAT SHACKLES HIM...
MAKE IT *LOOK* LIKE YOU ARE AIMING FOR SHIGEKATA, AND THEN...
...AND HAVE THE TWO OF YOU *KILL HIM.*
BUT YOU *CANNOT* ATTACK THE BOY FIRST.


O-YAKATA-SAMA!
A TRICK DOWN HERE AS WELL.
HMN ...!

I HEARD RUMORS THAT THE KUNITOMO GUNSMITHS HAD CRAFTED A FAN-SHAPED, MULTIPLE-FIRE GUN...BUT *THIS?*
ALL THE ROUNDS... FIRED.
THIS HAS TO BE IT...



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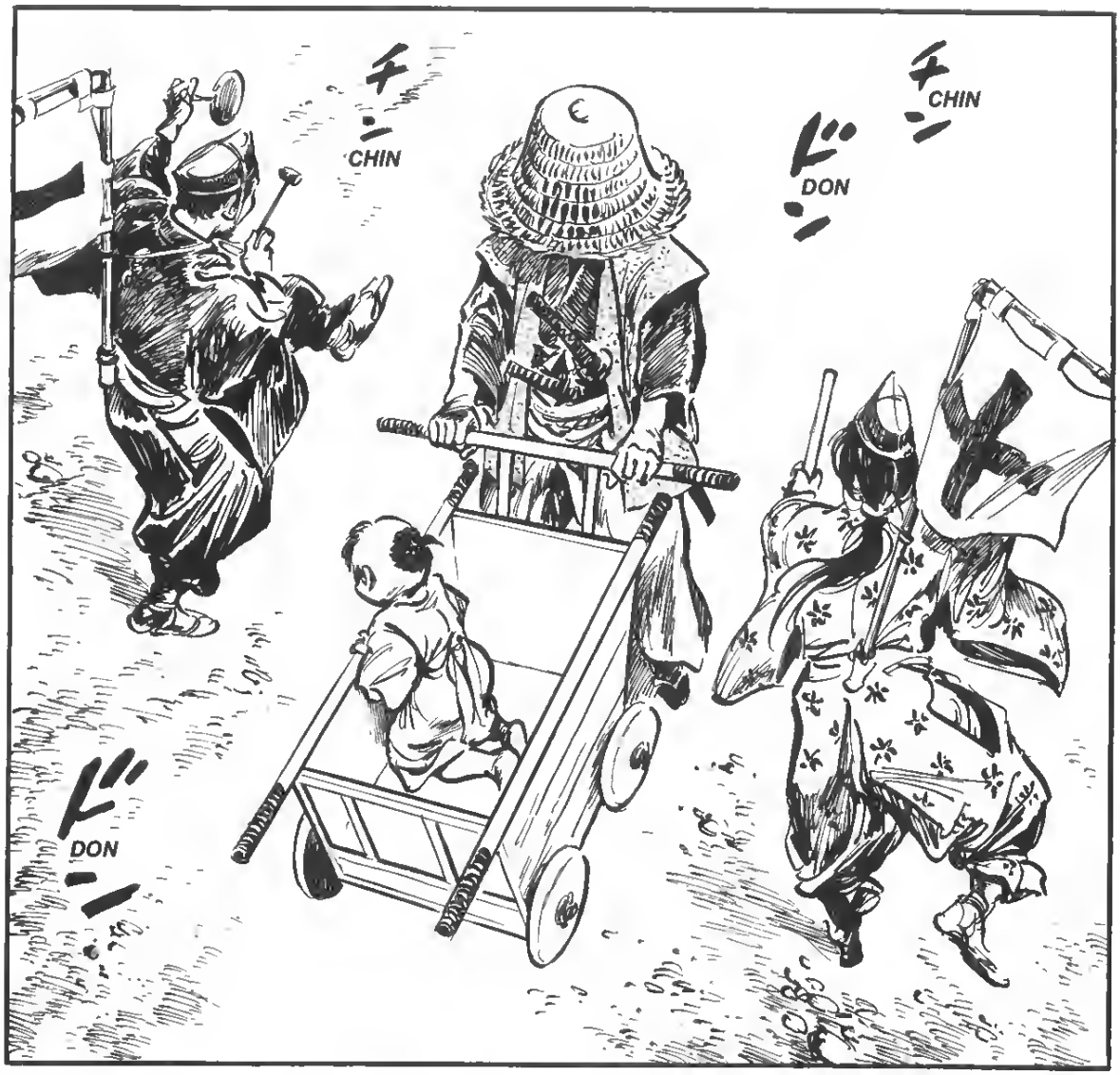
ガラガラ...
GA RA GA RA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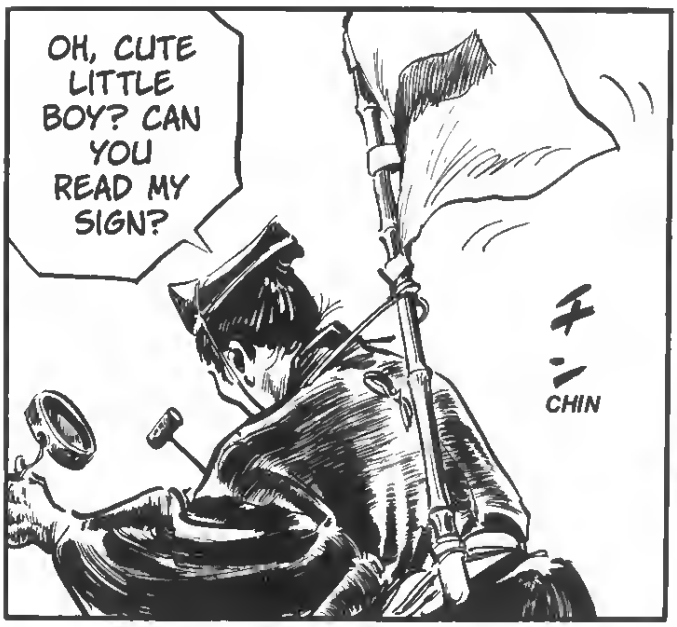
OH, CUTE LITTLE BOY? CAN YOU READ MY SIGN?
チ
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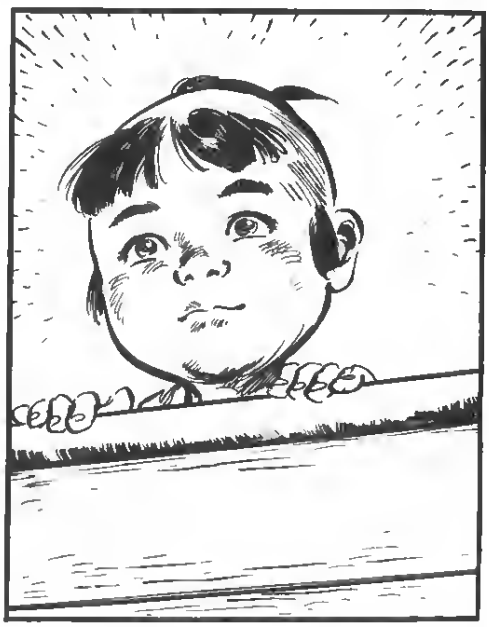
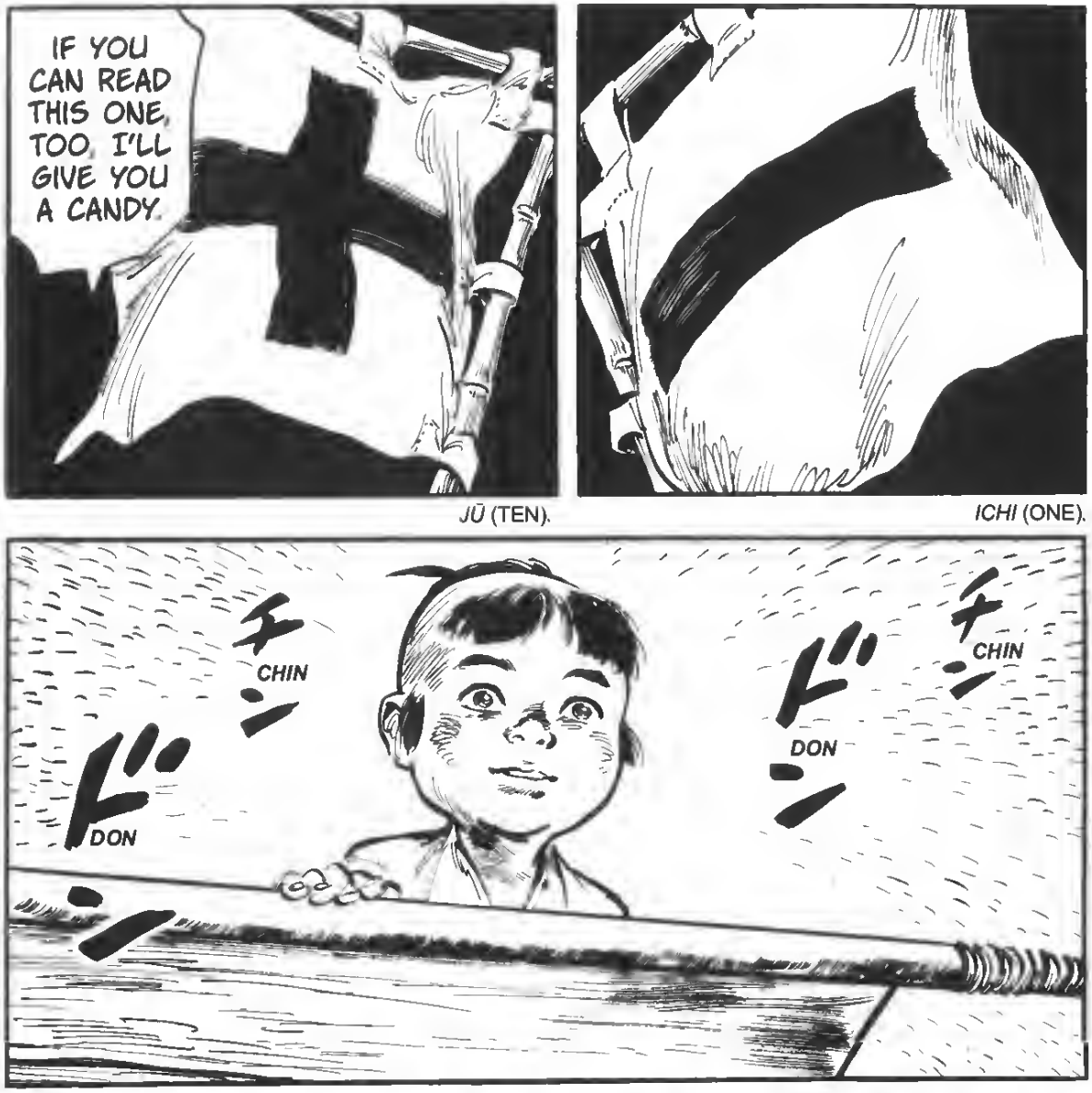
CHIN




IF YOU CAN READ THIS ONE, TOO, I'LL GIVE YOU A CANDY.
JŪ (TEN).
ICHI (ONE).
CHIN
DON
DON
CHIN

其之一
示現の鞘
七
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 7
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CHIN
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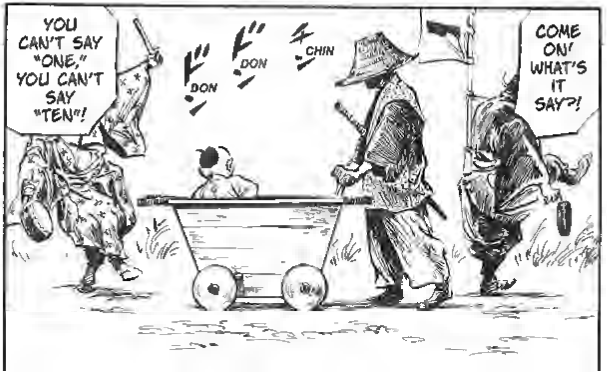
CHIN

CHIN
DON


YOU CAN'T SAY "ONE," YOU CAN'T SAY "TEN"!
DON
DON
CHIN
COME ON! WHAT'S IT SAY?!

DON
CHIN

BUT IF Y'CAN READ, YOU GET A CANDY. IF!
DON
CHIN
DON
CHIN

YOU!!
シュッ
FWP
シュカ
FWKK
HAND IT OVER!
YOU HAVE SOMETHING GIVEN YOU BY A SATSUMA SPY!

IF YOU DON'T, KNOW THAT THIS BOY DIES!
TOSS IT OVER! DO THAT, AND WE'LL SPARE HIS LIFE!
GYAAA!
ギャアア
ガ
CHOMP!
ブ

FWWKK

THỤK

ビュ
WHOO
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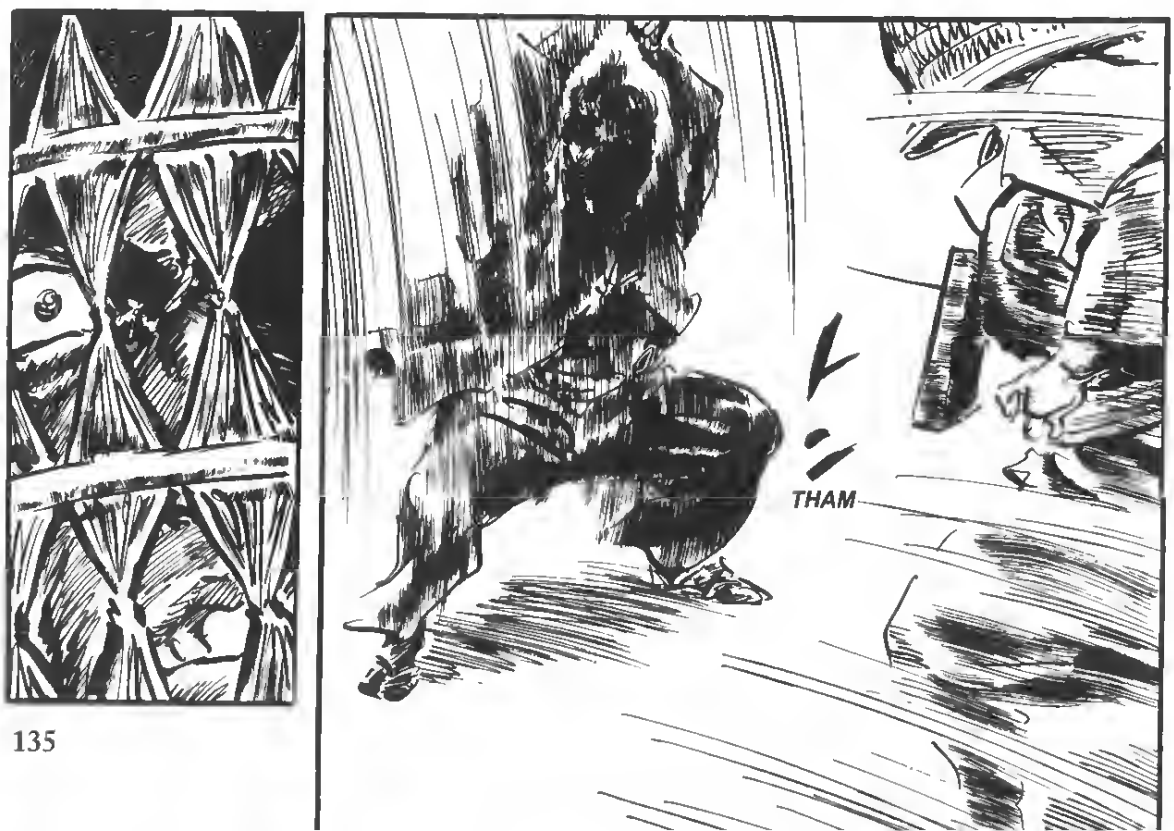
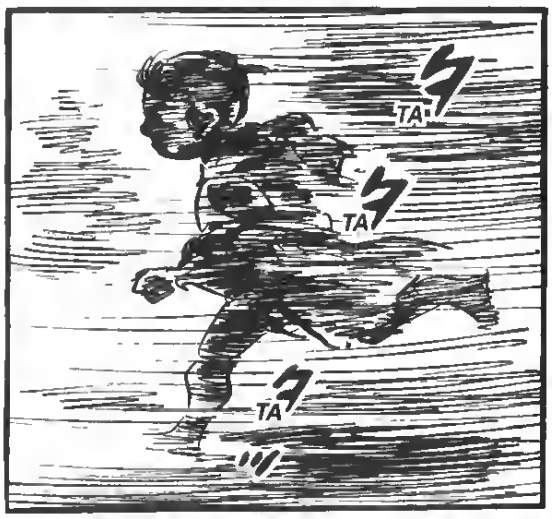
FWT
CHESUTOOOOOO!!
ド
THWD

FWOO
WHSHH-

BWAH


THAM

ズ
SKRRSH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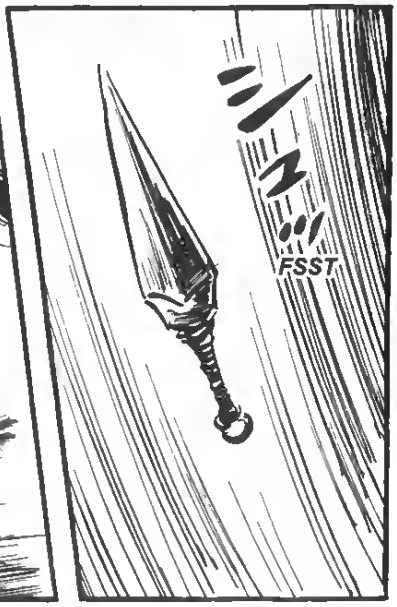
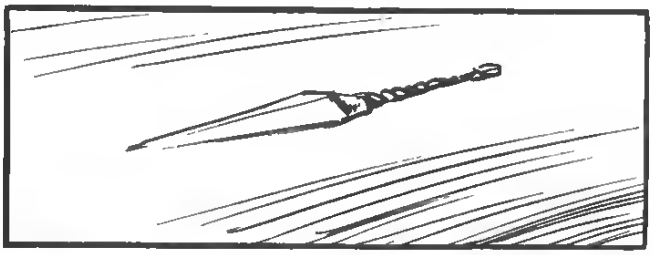
FWAP

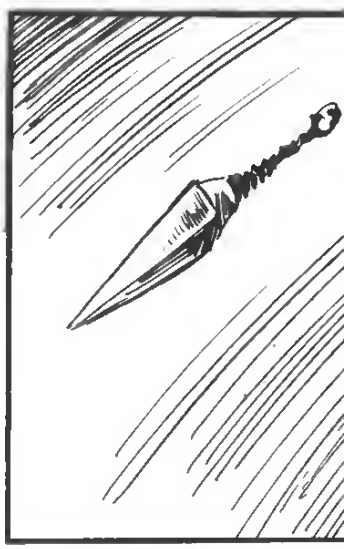

シュ
FSST

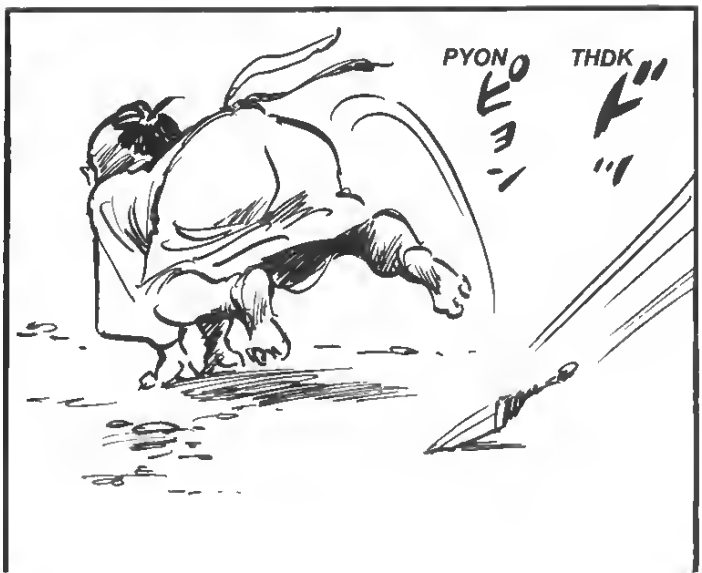
CHK

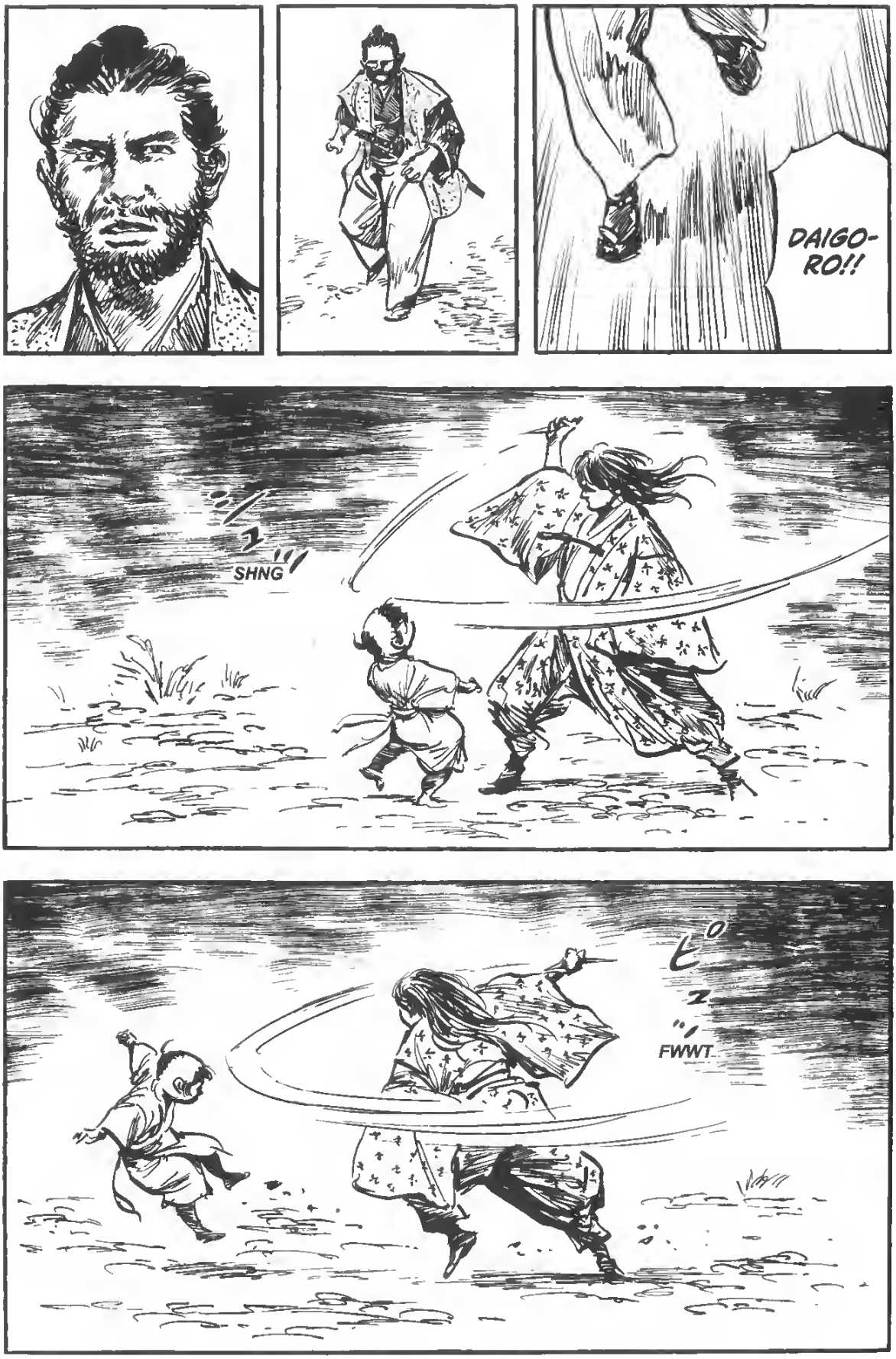
THK



PYONG




PYON
THDK


DAIGO-
RO!!
SHNG
FWWT

SKSSH
SHSS
FWT
RRRRNGG!!
SRRK

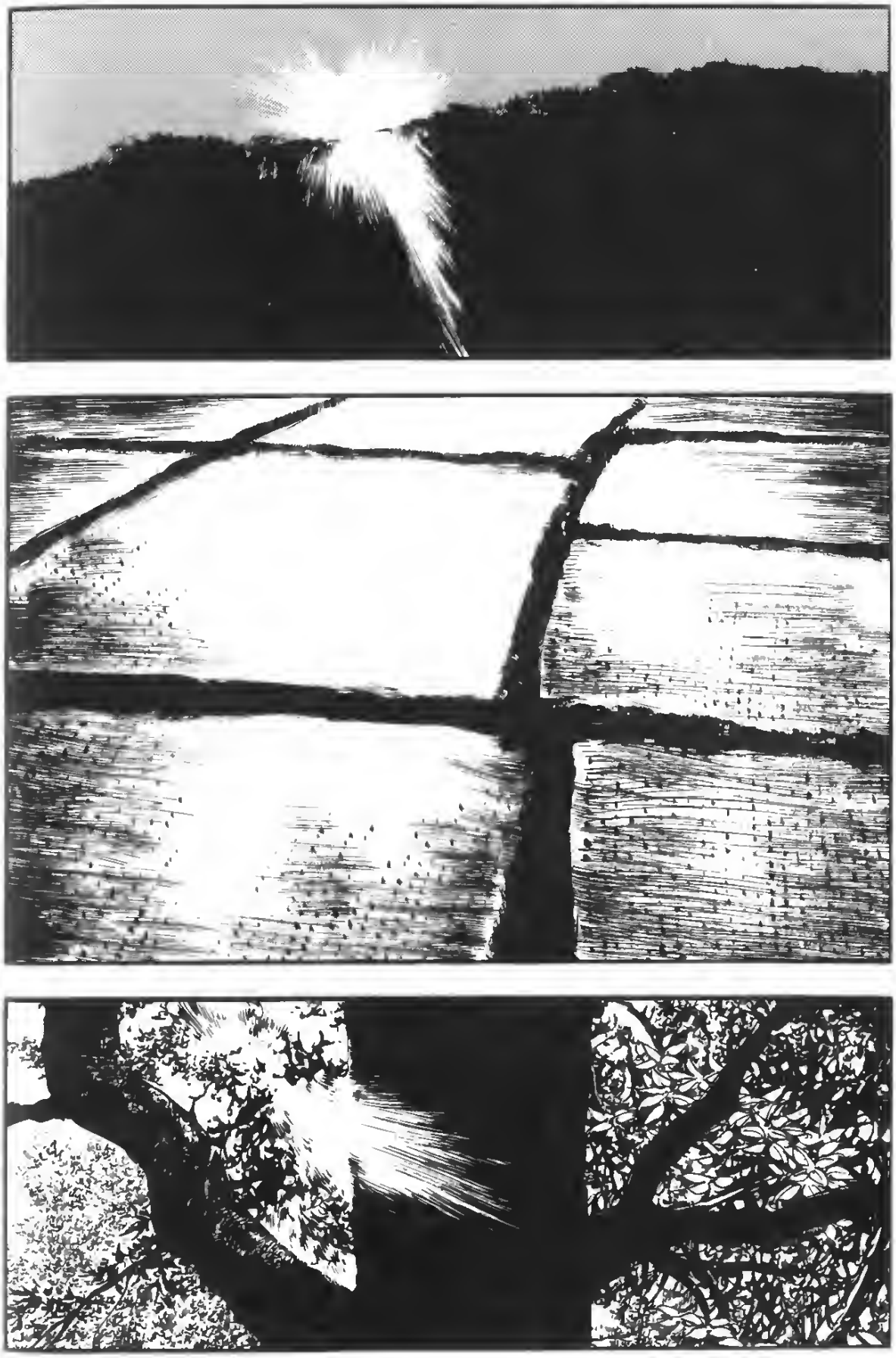
BWAH
KAKK

SKUSH

KSHAK
DASH
IT COULD ONLY BE BECAUSE... MANY TIMES, MANY TENS, HUNDREDS OF TIMES...
DAY AFTER DAY AFTER COMING DAY... YOU WATCHED WITH YOUR FATHER THE ATTACKING ASSASSIN BLADES!
WHAT...WHAT KIND OF BOY ARE YOU... DODGING THE CERTAIN DEATH OF A *SHINOBI* BLADE, ESCAPING BY A PAPER'S THICKNESS?!
UH-UH... ...
ONLY BECAUSE YOU FOLLOWED THEM WITH THESE EYES, DODGING ATTACK AFTER ATTACK AS YOU FOUGHT BESIDE YOUR FATHER.

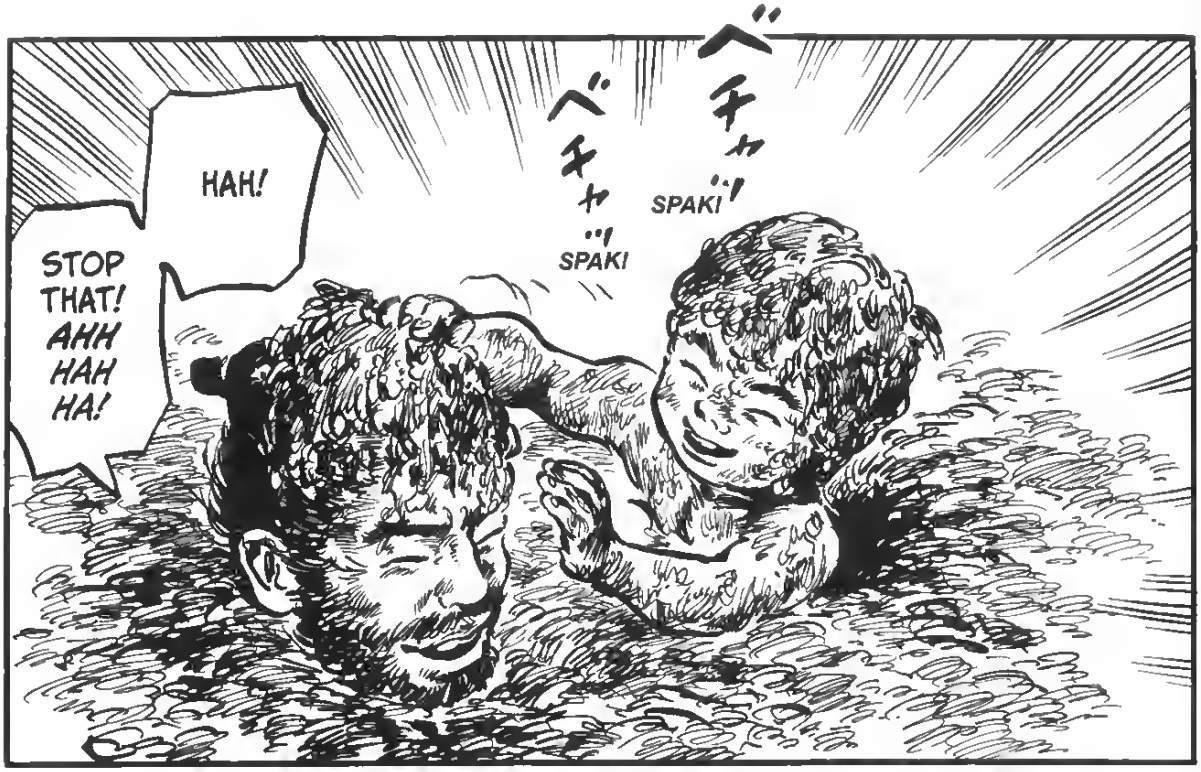
TRULY! SOI IS THE PERFECTION OF THE SWORD! UH-UH-UH...
SHISHŌ-GAN, THE SWORD OF SLAUGHTER. SOI IS WHAT YOUR TECHO GAVE YOU, DAIGORO...!
MEIFU-MADŌ ITSELF...

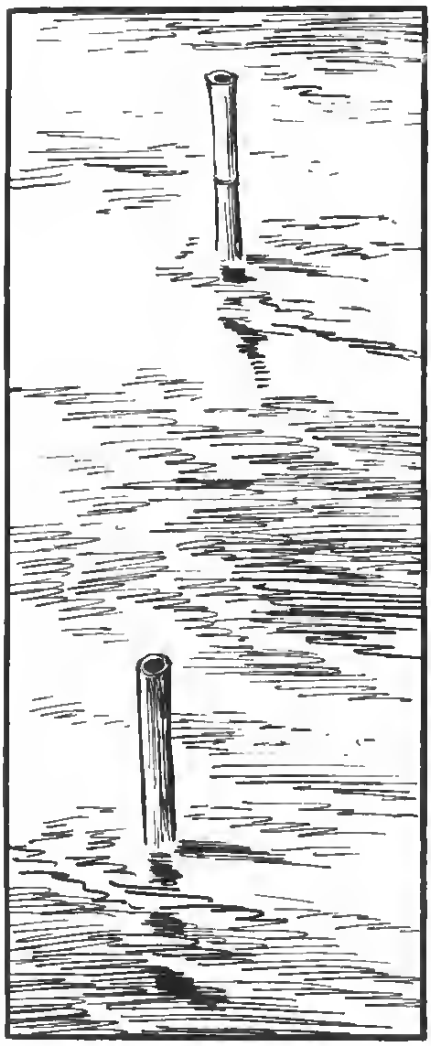
其之一
示現の鞘
（八）
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 8

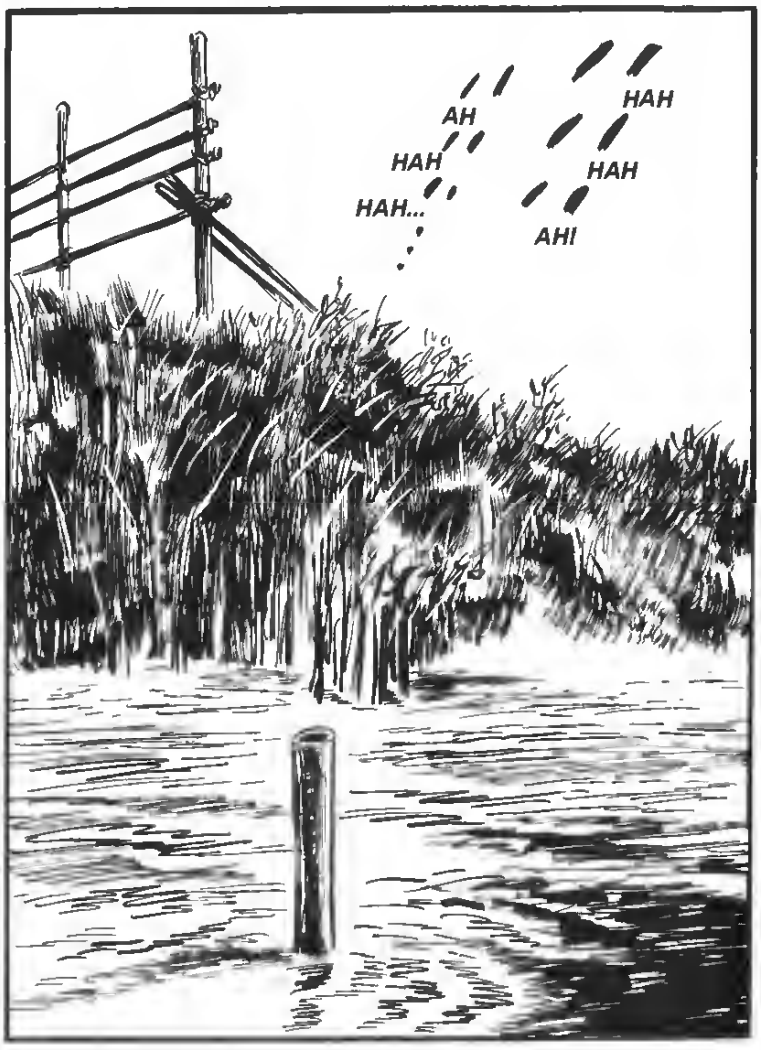


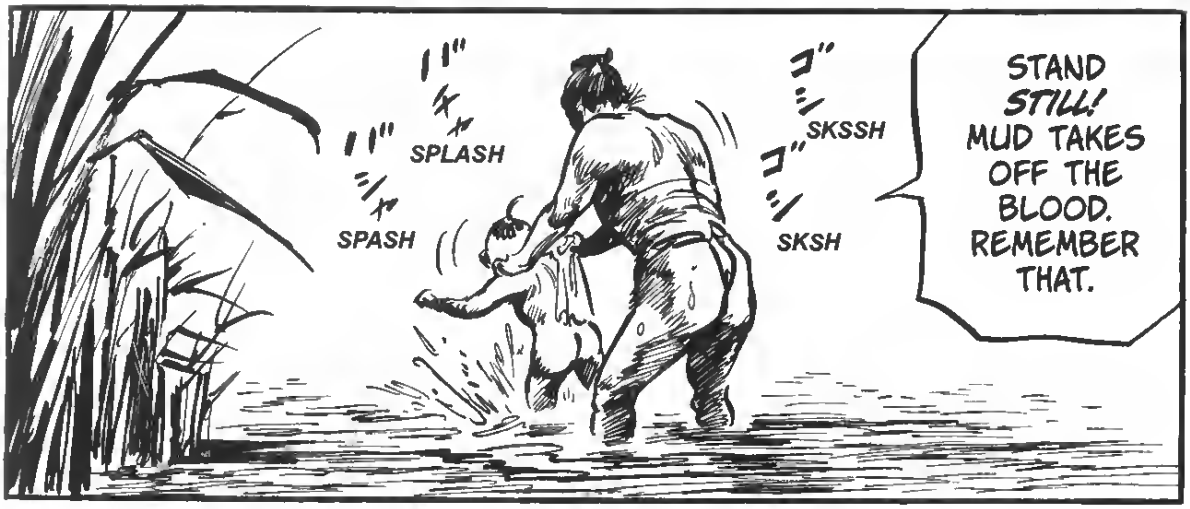
HAHF!
YOU PROBABLY THINK IT'S HOT IN THE MUD, BUT STAY IN A LITTLE LONGER.

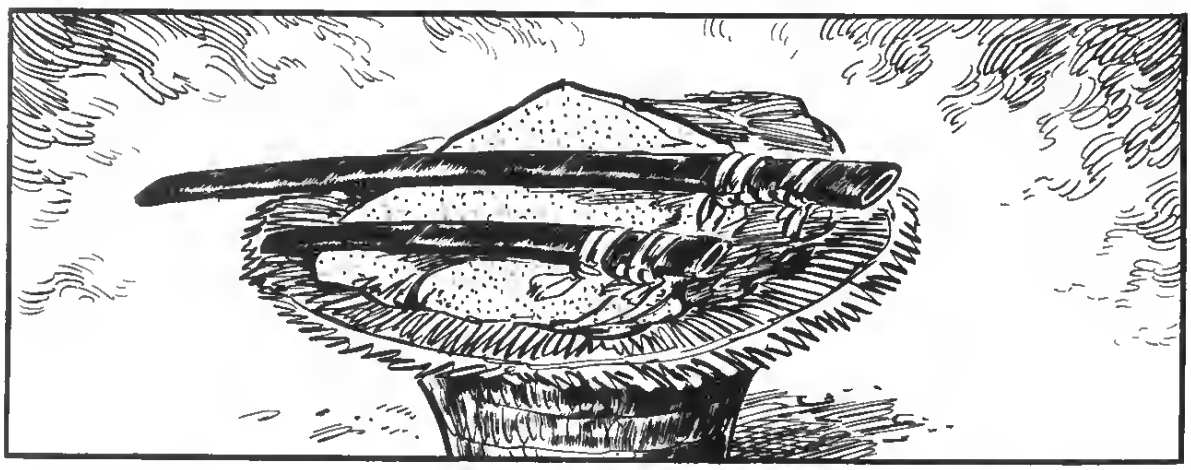
GIVE UP AND I WON'T FEED YOU LUNCH.
DAIGORO. DON'T GIVE UP!
グチャ
SPLAK!
ベチャ
SPLURK!
WHEWF!

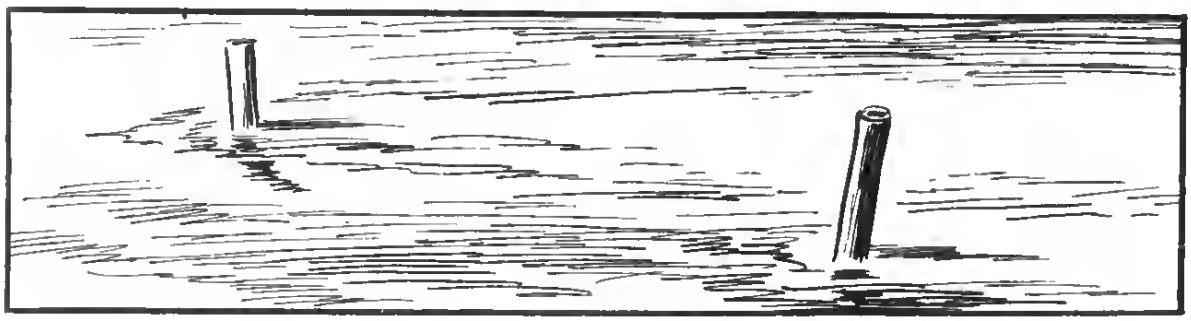

HAH!
STOP THAT! AHH HAH HA!
ベチャ
SPAK!
ベチャ
SPAK!




AH
HAH
HAH...
HAH
HAH
AH!

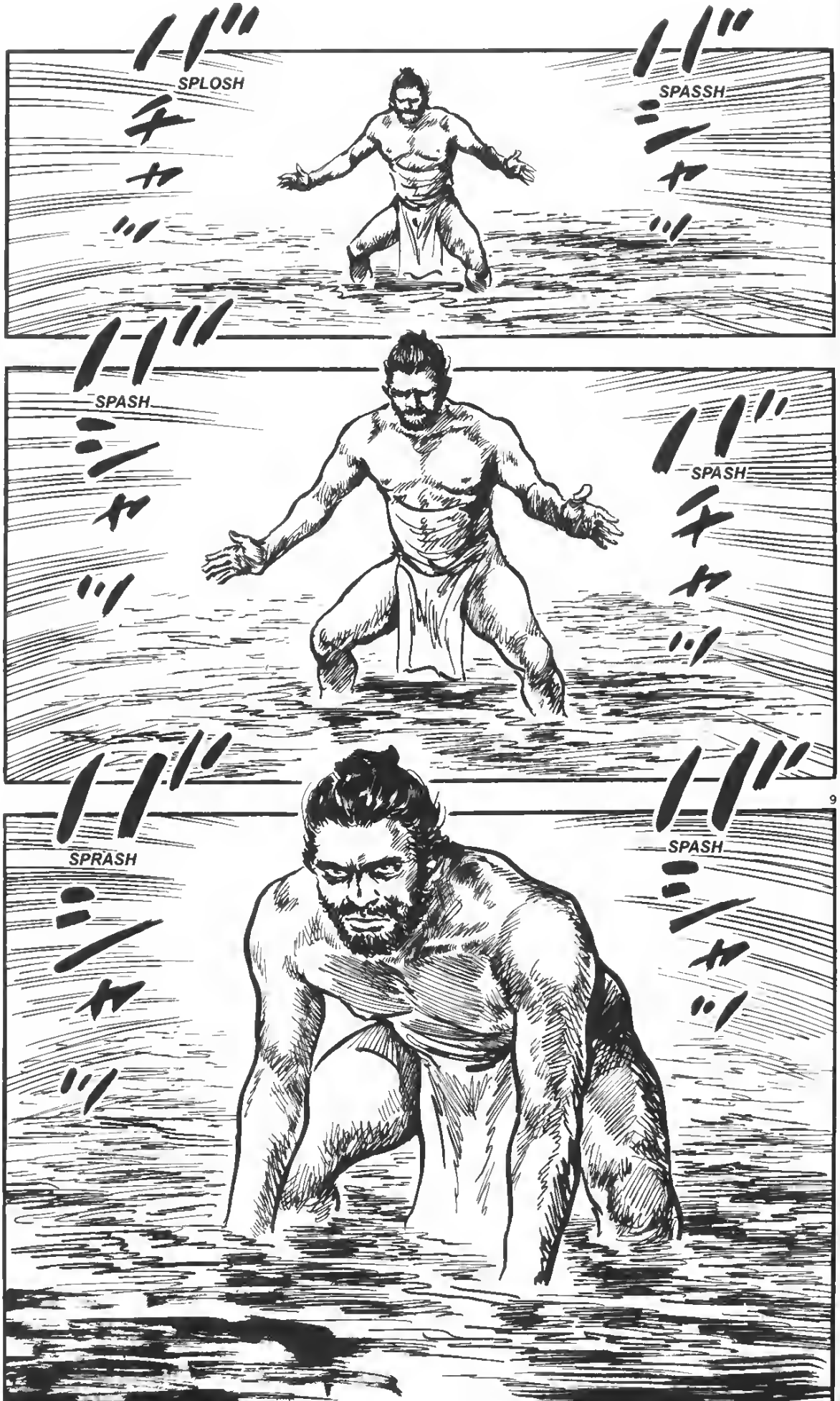

SPLASH
SPASH
SKSSH
SKSH
STAND STILL! MUD TAKES OFF THE BLOOD. REMEMBER THAT.





SPLSH
HOW'S THAT?! FEELS GOOD, EH?
ZUBOSSHH

BLOSH
SPASSH
SPASSH


SPLOSH
SPASSH
SPASH
SPASH
SPRASH
SPASH

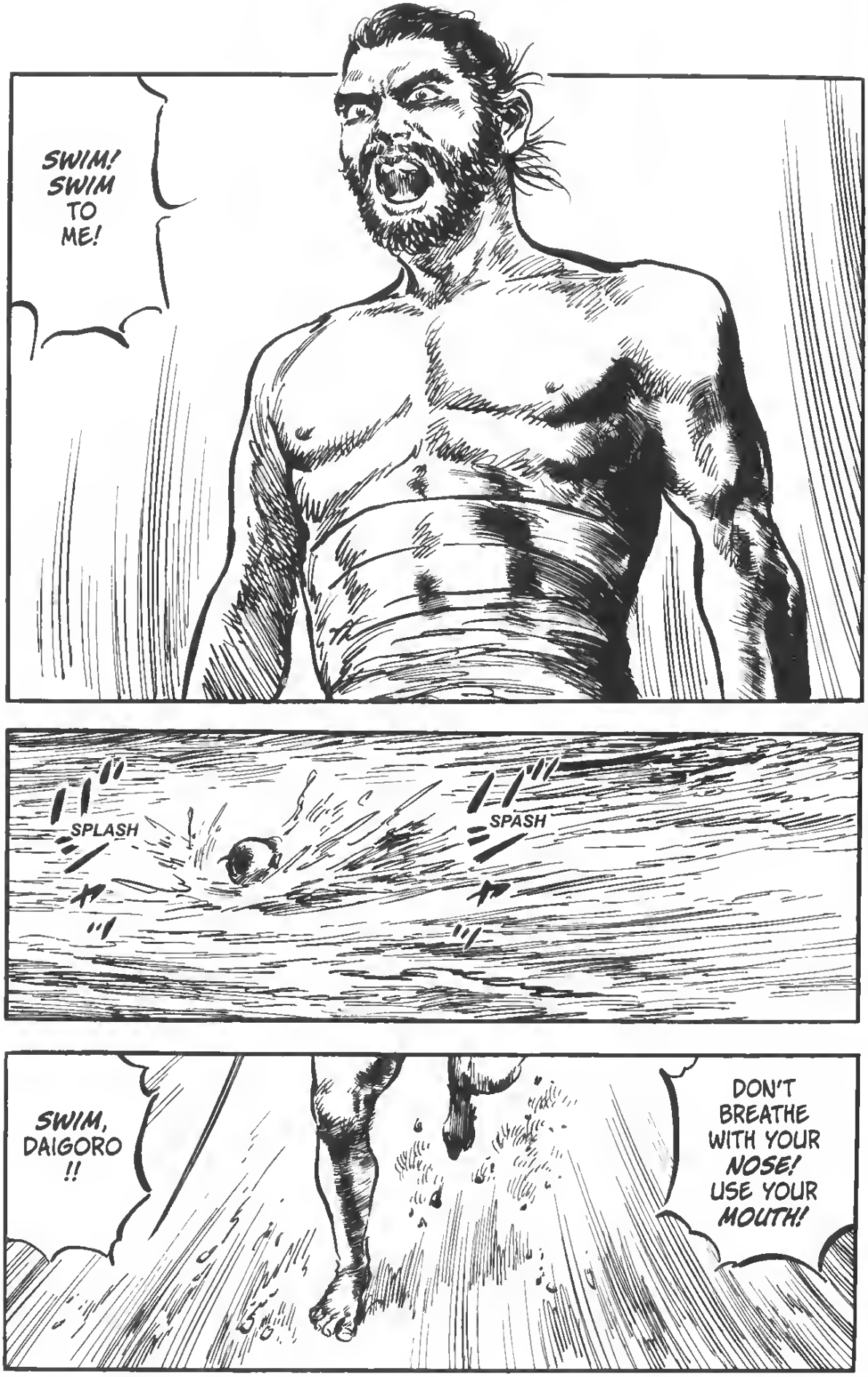
シャアア
SHRAAA
GARRRH!!
ヒュン
SHUU
URK
ウッ!!

SKASH
CHESUTOOO!

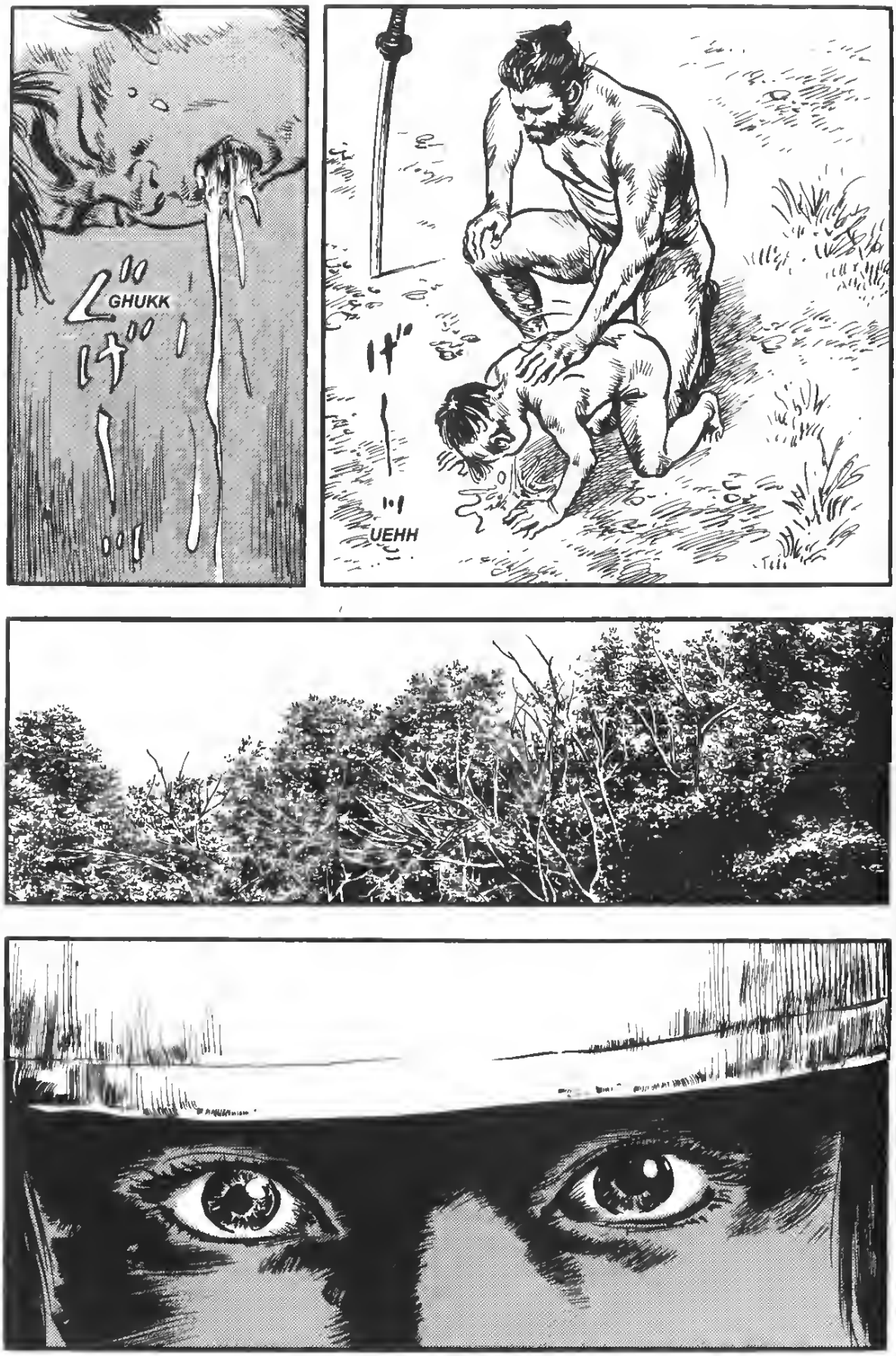
FWWP
ビュ
ドッ
THUK

HNG?! DAIGORO! CAN'T YOU SWIM?!
SPLSH
SPASH

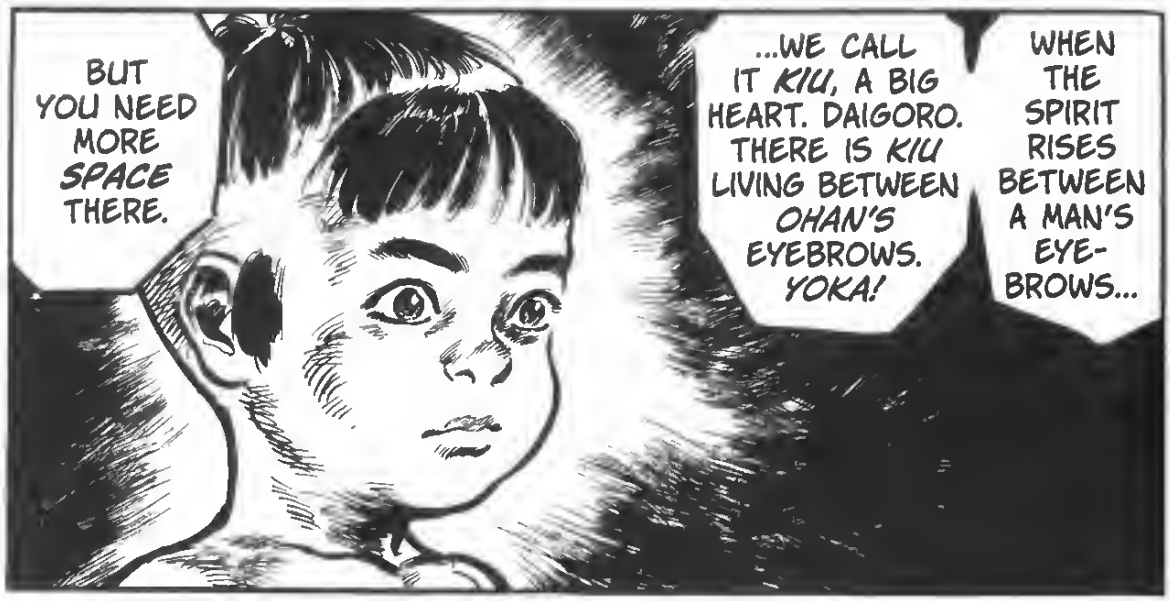
BRB
BRBB
KRNCH
HAUF

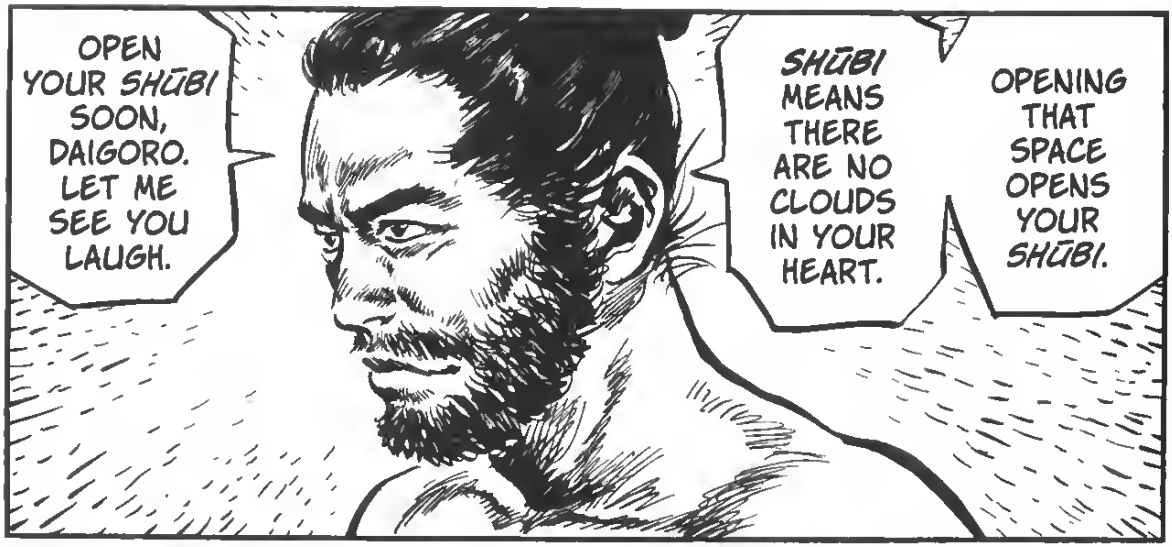

SWIM! SWIM TO ME!
SPLASH
SPASH
SWIM, DAIGORO !!
DON'T BREATHE WITH YOUR NOSE! USE YOUR MOUTH!

SPASH
SPLSH
HAHF
HAHF
SPAASH
YOKA!
YO-
KAAA!
GRP


GHUKK
UEHH

YOKA, DAIGORO. YOU SWAM WELL. YOU GAVE IT YOUR BEST!


BUT YOU NEED MORE *SPACE* THERE.
...WE CALL IT *KIU*, A BIG HEART. DAIGORO. THERE IS *KIU* LIVING BETWEEN *OHAN'S* EYEBROWS. *YOKA!*
WHEN THE SPIRIT RISES BETWEEN A MAN'S EYE-BROWS...

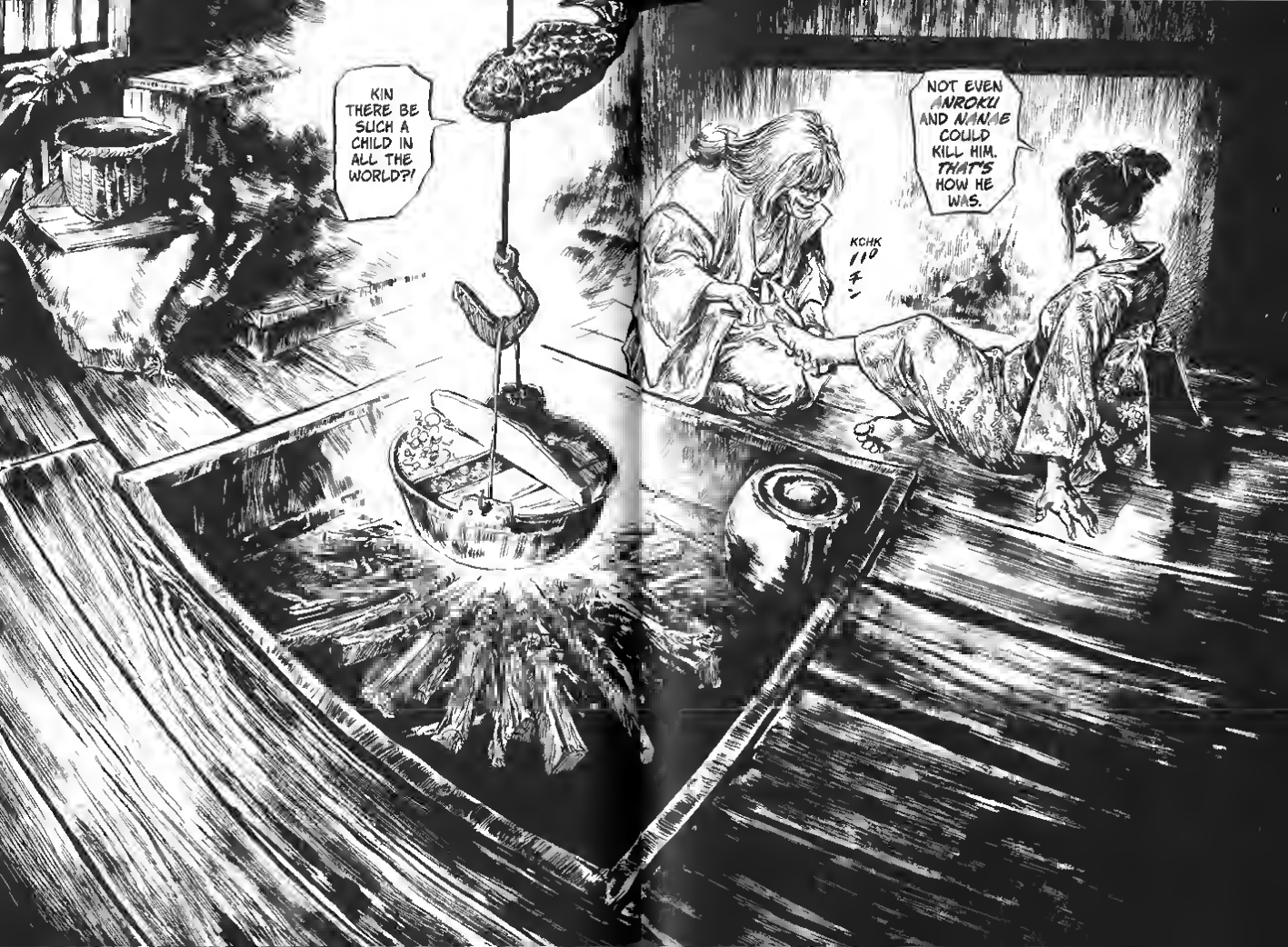

OPEN YOUR *SHŪBI* SOON, DAIGORO. LET ME SEE YOU LAUGH.
SHŪBI MEANS THERE ARE NO CLOUDS IN YOUR HEART.
OPENING THAT SPACE OPENS YOUR *SHŪBI*.

OPEN YOUR *SHŪBI*. SPREAD YOUR *KIU!* WITH PRIDE.

WHATEVER HAPPENS, *OI* AND *OHAN*, WE ARE *TWO.*

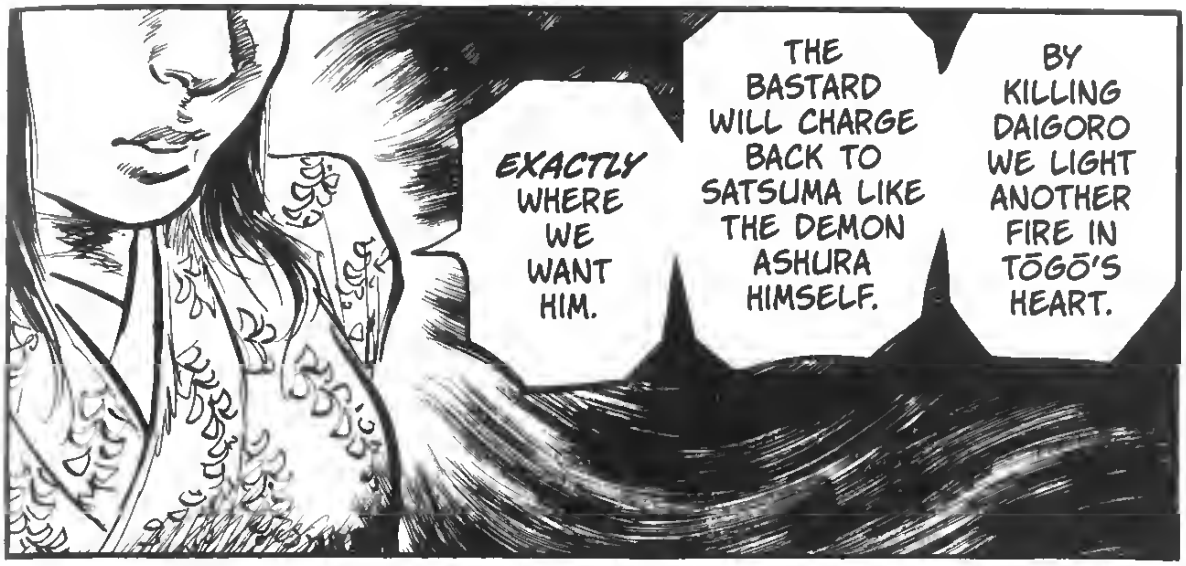
WITHOUT REGRET! WE WILL LIVE ON FIRE!

示現の鞘 九
THE FIRST
THE JIGEN
SCABBARD,
PART 9


KIN THERE BE SUCH A CHILD IN ALL THE WORLD?!
NOT EVEN ANROKU AND NANAE COULD KILL HIM. THAT'S HOW HE WAS.
KCHK

HE'S ŌGAMI ITTŌ'S ORPHAN. DAIGORO.
MAYBE TAKEHIME-SAMA'S EYES BE MISTAKEN?
THE WOLF CHILD... THE BOY WITH SHI-SHŌGAN EYES....

I CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE MORE OF MY MEN. YOU KILL HIM FOR ME, BABA.
NOW WHERE YOU SUPPOSE TŌGŌ SHIGEKATA PICKED UP THAT'N...? ŌGAMI ITTŌ'S LITTLE BOY! WHEE HEE HEE HEE!
A NEW DADDY WOLF. A NEW WOLF AND CUB! OHH HO HO HO!
TUT, NO NEED TO KILL 'IM. JES' LET 'IM BE.
KCHK

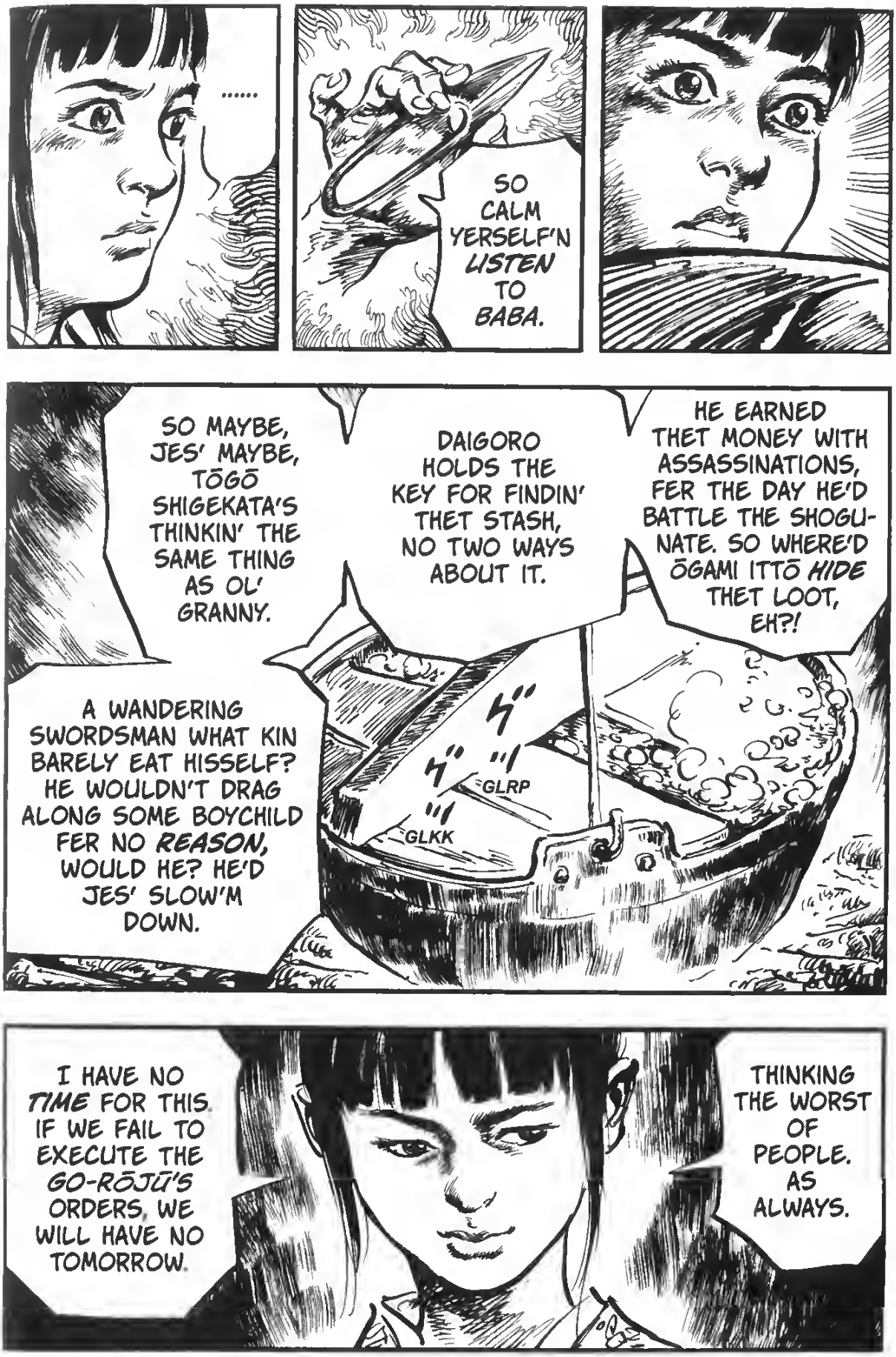

EXACTLY WHERE WE WANT HIM.
THE BASTARD WILL CHARGE BACK TO SATSUMA LIKE THE DEMON ASHURA HIMSELF.
BY KILLING DAIGORO WE LIGHT ANOTHER FIRE IN TŌGŌ'S HEART.

OR DO YOU WANT TO DIE BY MY HAND?!

KILL HIM! HAG!!

FWASHH

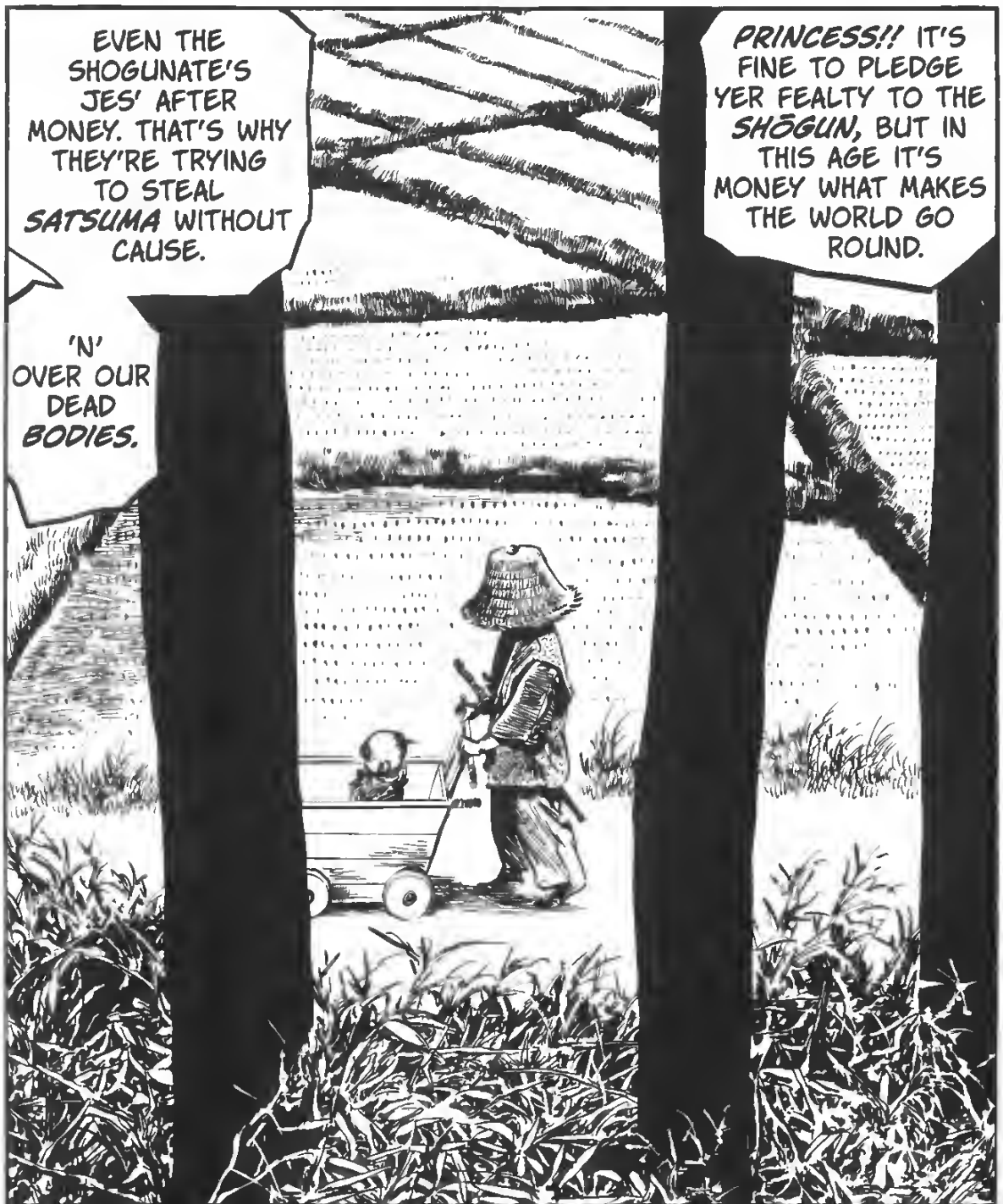
THP
PRINCESS! ŌGAMI ITTŌ EARNED FIVE HUNDRED *RYŌ* PER KILLIN'! MUST ADD UP TO TENS'A *THOUSANDS.*


.....
SO CALM YERSELF'N *LISTEN* TO *BABA*.
SO MAYBE, JES' MAYBE, TŌGŌ SHIGEKATA'S THINKIN' THE SAME THING AS OL' GRANNY.
A WANDERING SWORDSMAN WHAT KIN BARELY EAT HISSELF? HE WOULDN'T DRAG ALONG SOME BOYCHILD FER NO *REASON*, WOULD HE? HE'D JES' SLOW'M DOWN.
DAIGORO HOLDS THE KEY FOR FINDIN' THET STASH, NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT.
HE EARNED THET MONEY WITH ASSASSINATIONS, FER THE DAY HE'D BATTLE THE SHOGUNATE. SO WHERE'D ŌGAMI ITTŌ *HIDE* THET LOOT, EH?!
-GLRP
-GLKK
I HAVE NO *TIME* FOR THIS. IF WE FAIL TO EXECUTE THE *GO-RŌJŪ'S* ORDERS, WE WILL HAVE NO TOMORROW.
THINKING THE WORST OF PEOPLE. AS ALWAYS.

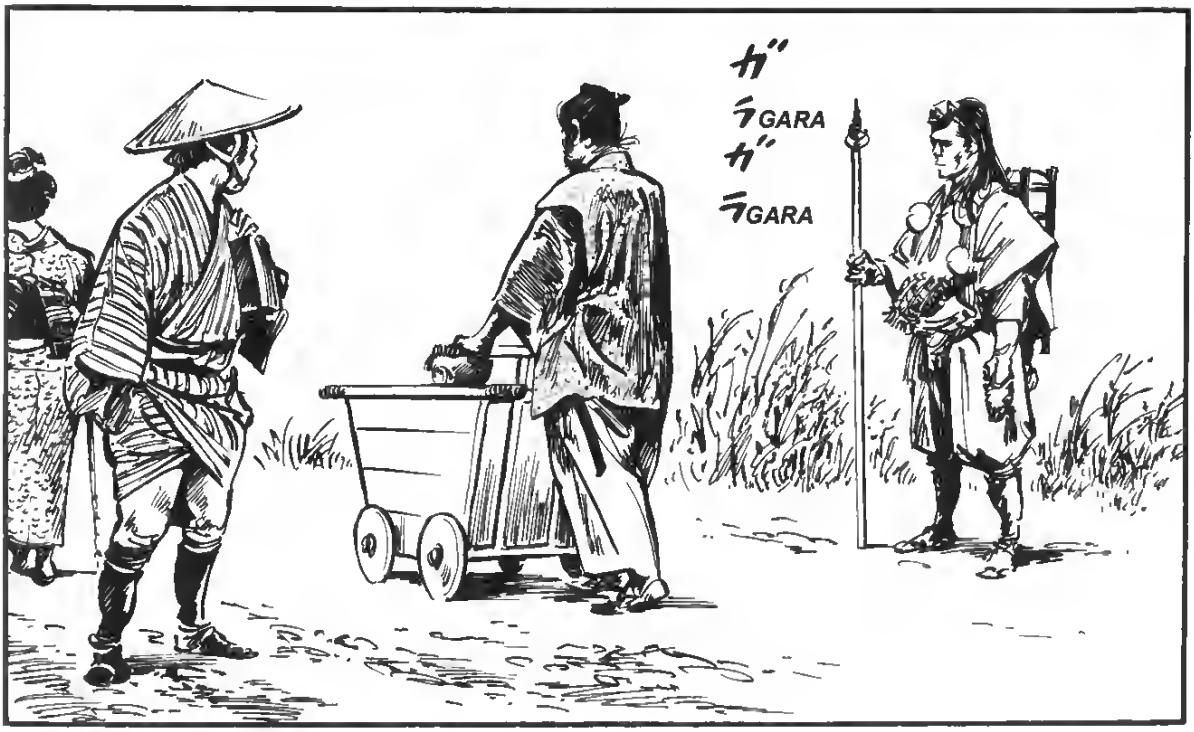
.....
YER FRETTIN' YER *OWN* MEAL MONEY WON'T GIT YOU THROUGH THE DAY, PRINCESS. I KIN SEE IT BETWEEN THEM EYEBROWS!
YOU GOTTA GIVE THEIR FAMILIES *SOMETHIN'!*
AND YOU GOTTA GIVE *OFFERIN'S* FOR ALL YER FOLK WHO'VE *DIED* FOR THEM ORDERS!
IF Y'DON'T, YOU'LL BE HEARIN' HATEFUL SPITE AND CURSES FROM THE FOLK WHAT LOST THEIR BREADWINNERS, SURE AS SURE!
SO WHAT'LL YOU *DO*, TAKEHIME ANZŌ-*DONO*?!

YER THINKIN', FINALLY, WORK AT LAST! BUT IT TURNS OUT TO BE SUCH A MONSTER JOB, ALL THE MONEY'N THE WORLD KIN'T PAY FOR IT.
WHAT WITH THET FEUD BETWEEN THE ASSASSINS AND THE EXECUTIONER, NO MORE WORK FOR US SPIES.
AND THAT GO-RŌJŪ A'YERS WON'T GIVE YOU A SINGLE COPPER UP FRONT. ALL PAYMENT ON SUCCESS. WELL...
IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, WE GOTTA MAKE A LI'L ON THE SIDE. EH, TAKEHIME?
TENS'A THOUSANDS OF THICK GOLD RYŌ. YOU REALLY GONNA LET THAT TŌGŌ GET IT AHEAD'A YOU?!

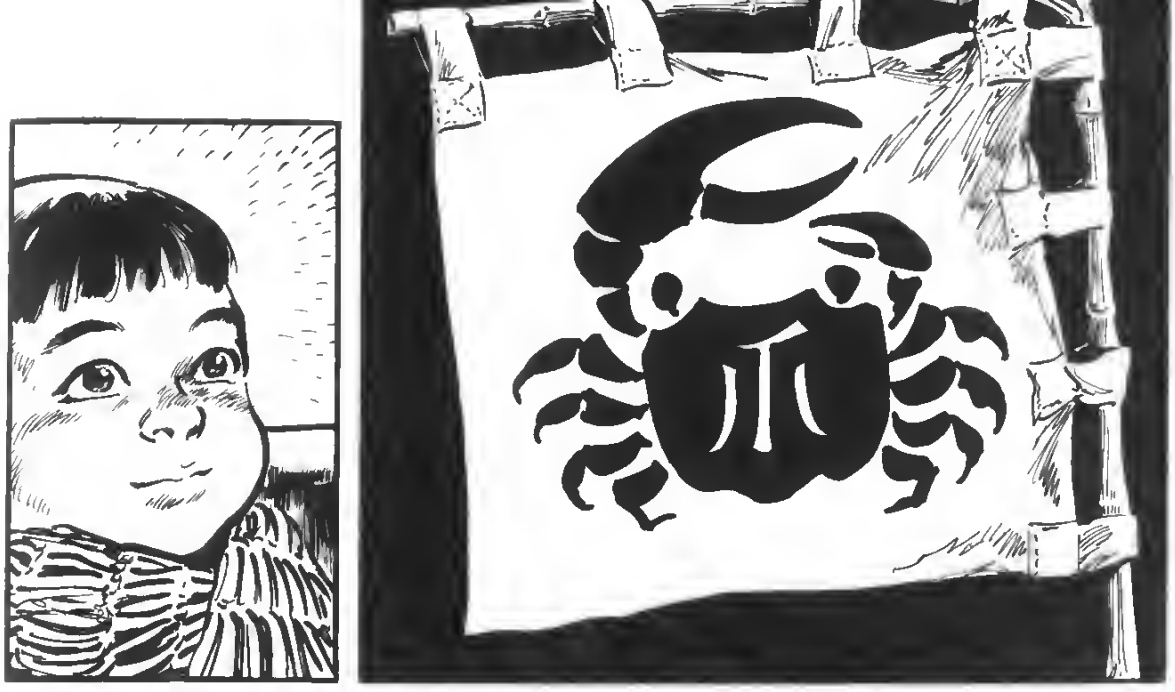
SHIGE-KATA KNOWS THAT MUCH.
YOU KIN'T GO KILLIN' DAIGORO. A WOLF CHILD DON'T BITE NOBODY. LET HIM RUN FREE, AND ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS FOLLOW!


EVEN THE SHOGUNATE'S JES' AFTER MONEY. THAT'S WHY THEY'RE TRYING TO STEAL *SATSUMA* WITHOUT CAUSE.
'N' OVER OUR DEAD *BODIES.*
PRINCESS!! IT'S FINE TO PLEDGE YER FEALTY TO THE *SHŌGUN,* BUT IN THIS AGE IT'S MONEY WHAT MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND.

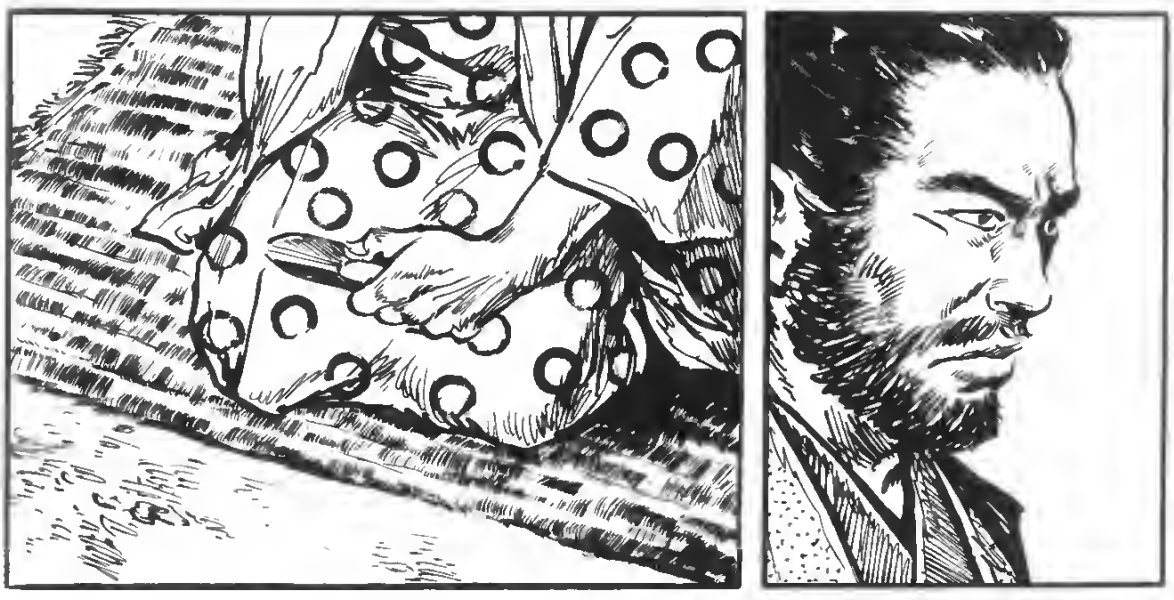
ガラ
GARA
ガラ
GARA

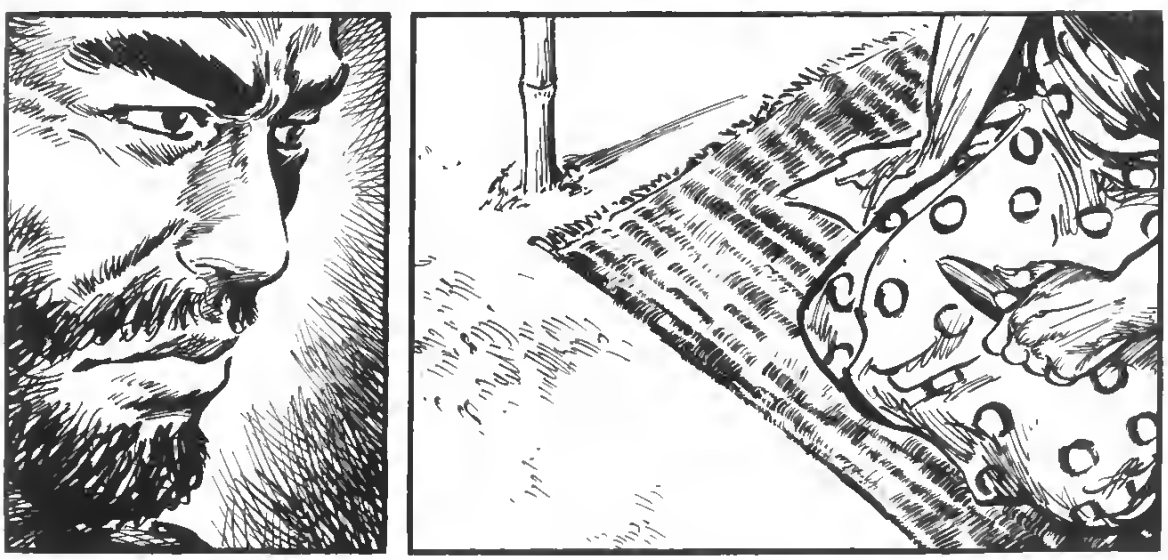

ガラ
GARA
ガラ
GARA

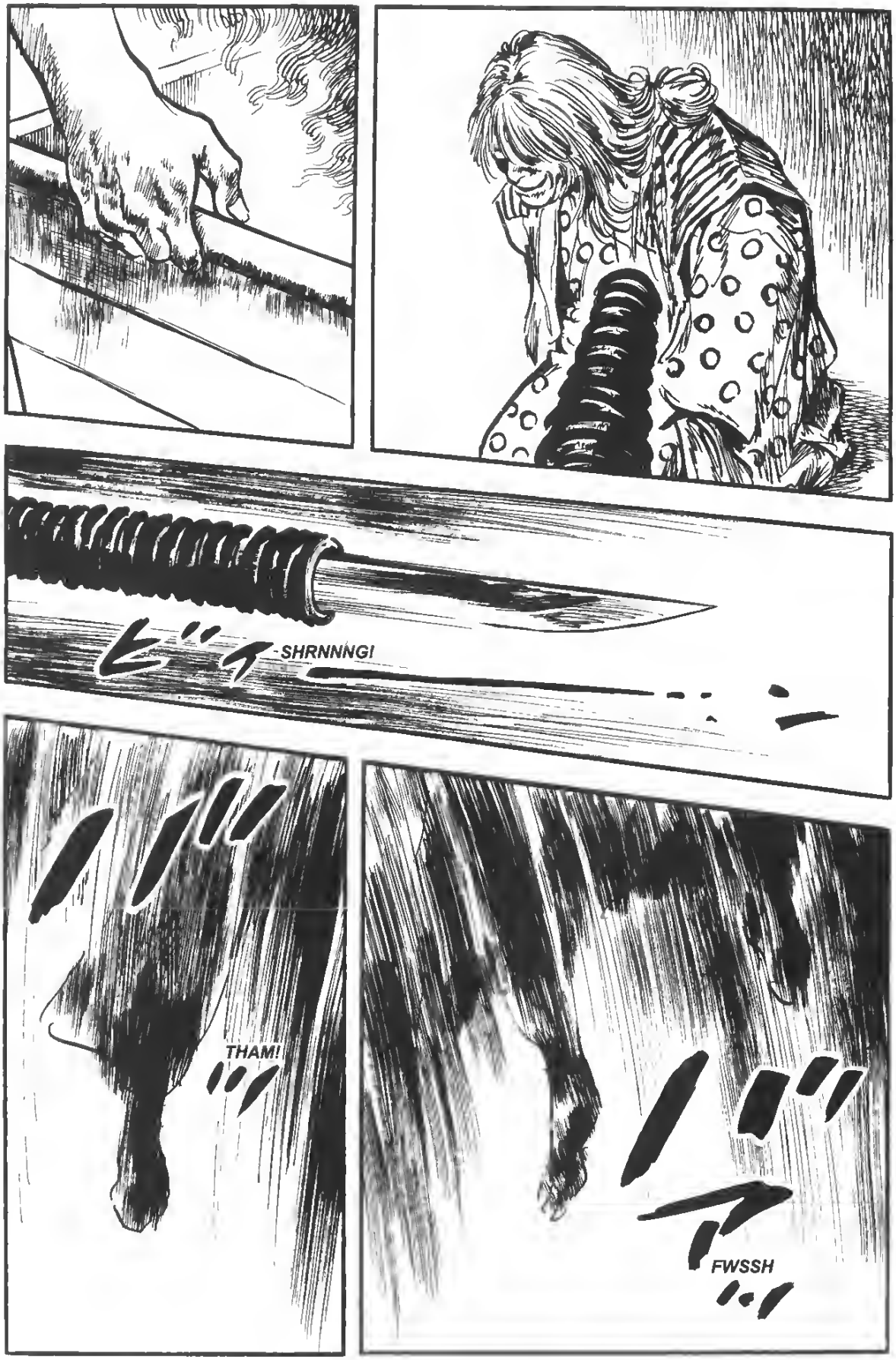
ガ"GARA
ラ
ガ"GARA
ラ
OH, SAMURAI-SAMA. HOW'S YER BOY'S LI'L TOENAILS DOIN'?
GIT TOO LONG, AND THEY GIT TORN OFF, HURT 'IM REAL BAD.
GIT 'EM CUT, I'M TELLIN' YA. HOW'S 'BOUT IT?
ガ"
ラ
GARA
ガ"
ラ
GARA
ガ"
ラ
GARA



CHARACTER IN THE CRAB IS *TSUME*, OR "NAILS."





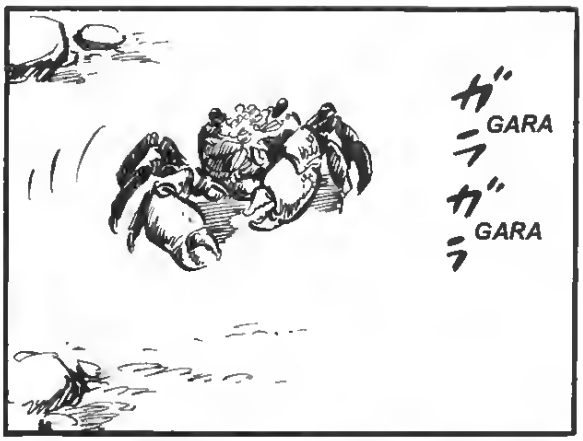

SHRNNNGI
THAM!
FWSSH

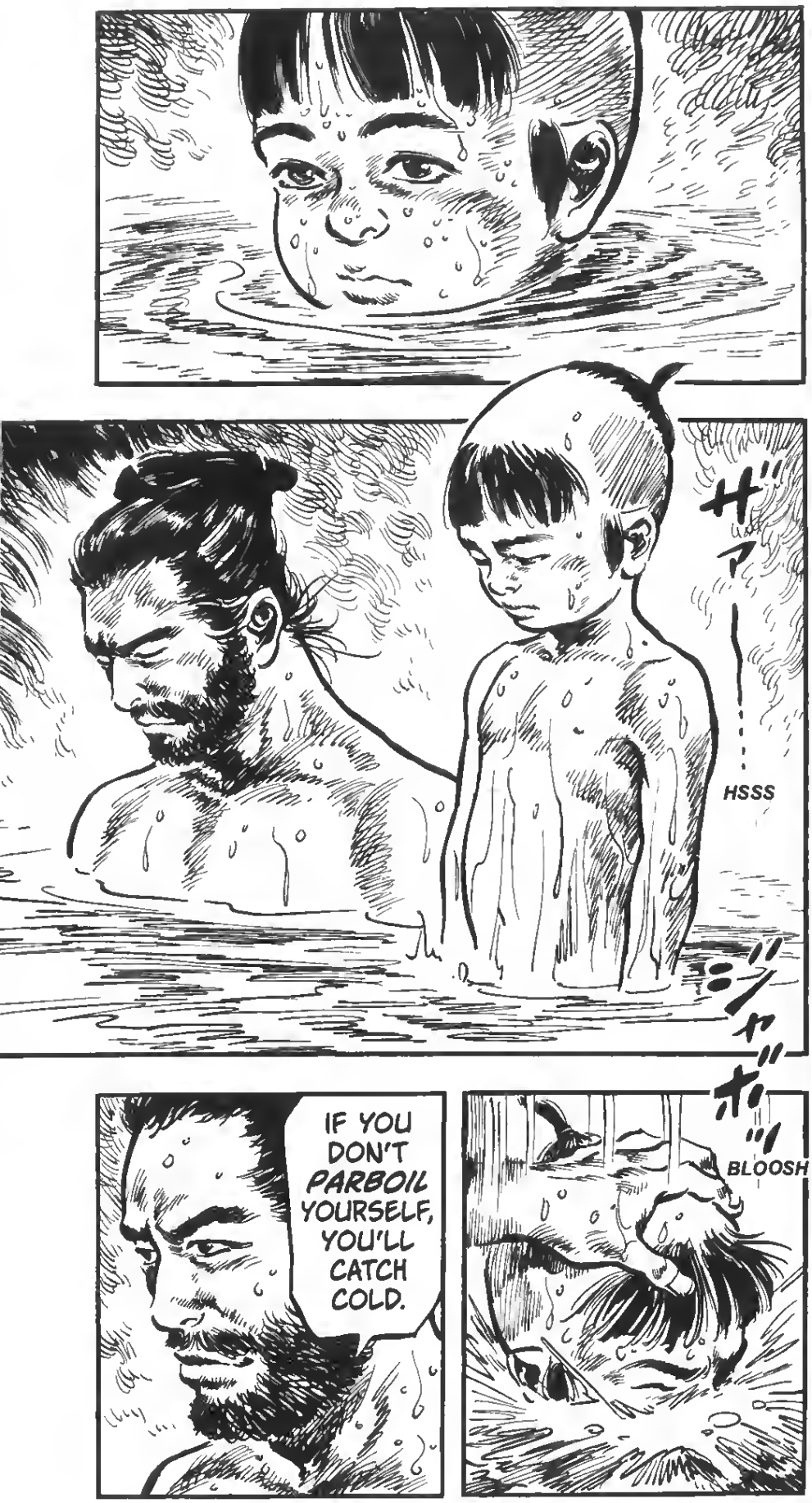
CHESUTOOO!

YOUR RIGHT WAS OUT OF SIGHT. SUSPICIOUS.
YOU HELD YOUR SCISSORS IN YOUR LEFT HAND. YOU SET YOUR FLAG ON YOUR RIGHT, SO YOU WEREN'T LEFT HANDED.
...DIDJA... KNOW ...?
HOW...
THAT MAN...HE'S AFTER YOUR DADDY'S GOLD.
DAI... GORO... YOU BE WARY, Y'HEAR?
...AFTER IT...
A... AHF...
HE'S...

WE HAVE TO HURRY.
SPLTT

ガ゛GARA
ニラガ゛GARA


ガ゛GARA
ニラガ゛GARA



其之一 示現の鞘（十）

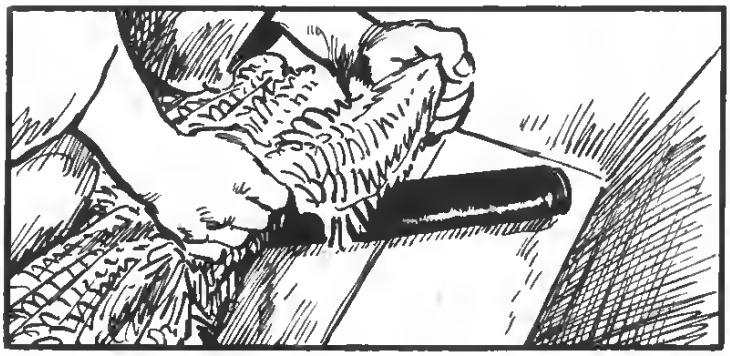
THE FIRST THE JIGEN SCABBARD, PART 10

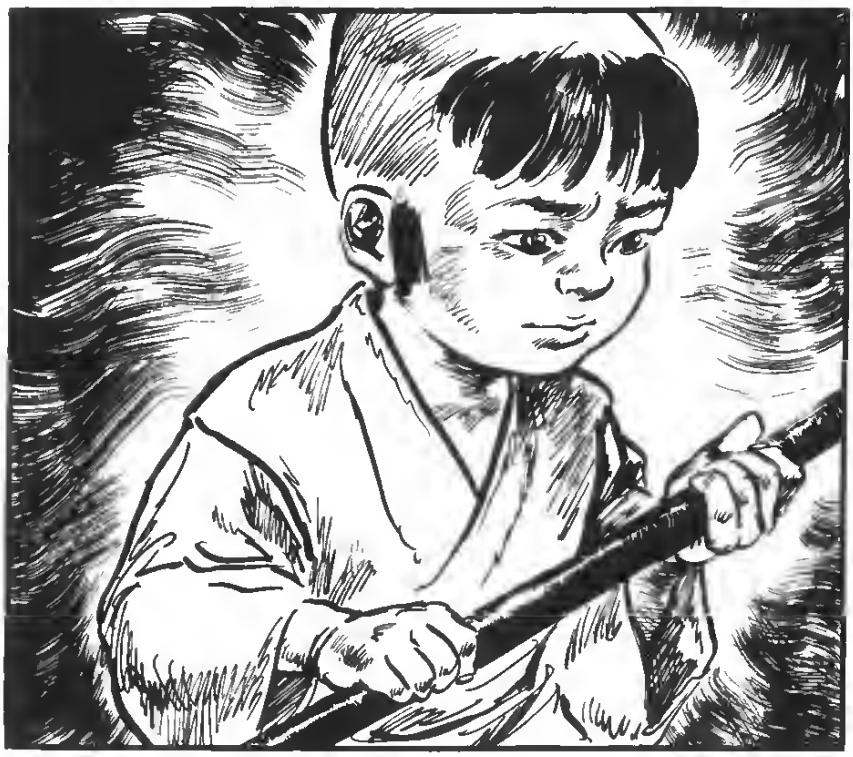
OHAN. THERE'S A BLACK LOOK IN YOUR EYES.
REMEMBERING YOUR TECHO ?!
ゴ" ゴ" ゴ" SKTCH SKTCH

DAI... GO- ROOO...
THAT MAN... HE'S AFTER YOUR DADDY'S GOLD.
H"
SPASSH

7

PEE
...?





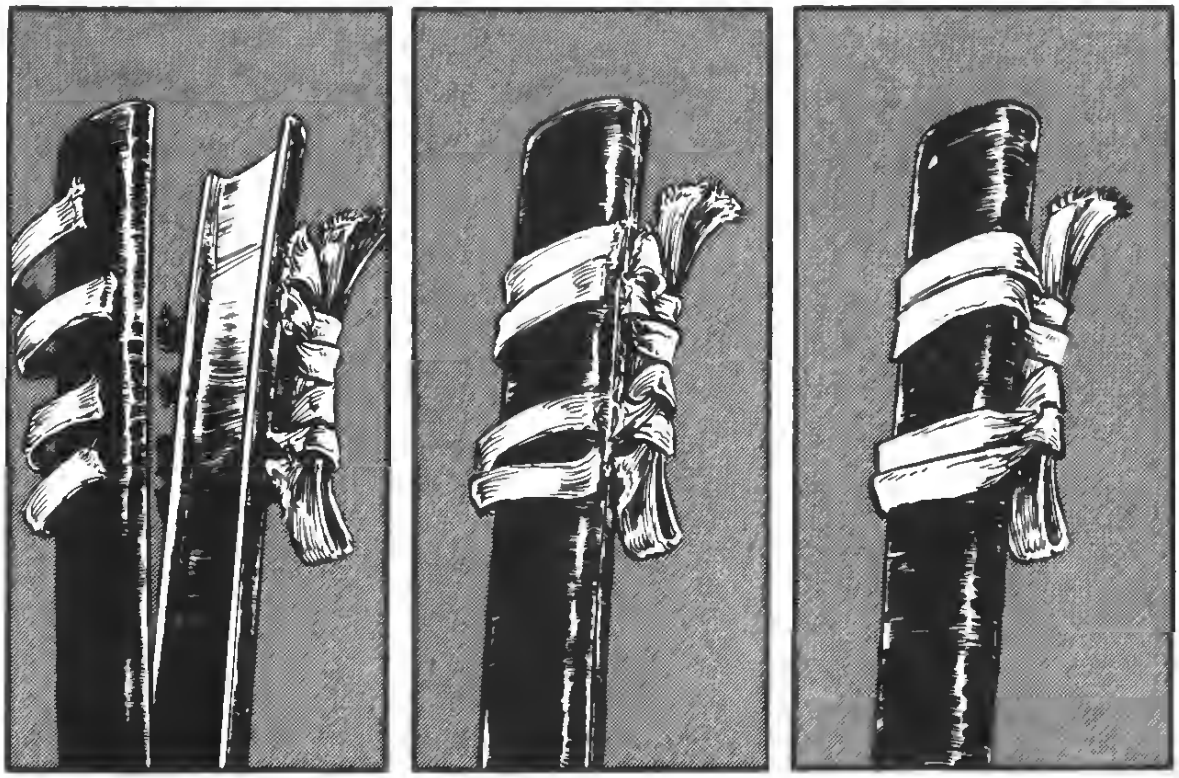
10
SKSH
SKSH
チリン
KLINK

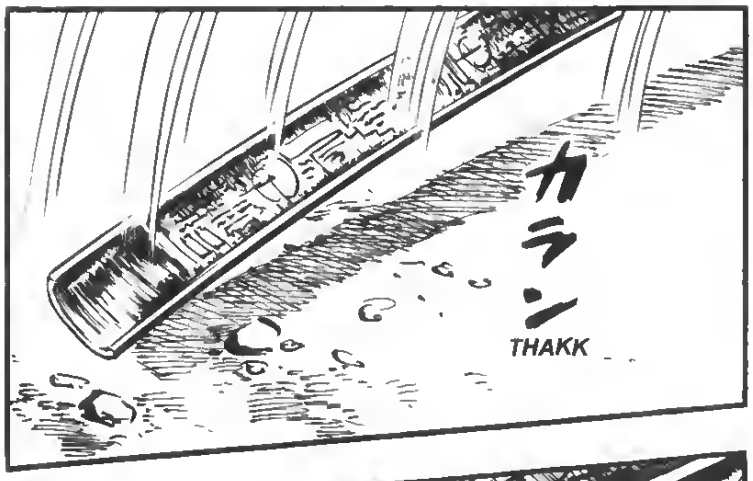
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?!
FWTT
TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT.
I DON'T NEED THINGS LIKE THAT. THAT'S OHAN'S EMERGENCY MONEY. IT WAS SEWN IN YOUR COLLAR.
YOUR TECHO'S SCAB-BARD?!

YOU WANT ME TO CUT IT OPEN?!
YOU MEAN THIS?

ヒュー
WSST

ちゃあん！
PAPAAAAAAAAA!!




カラン
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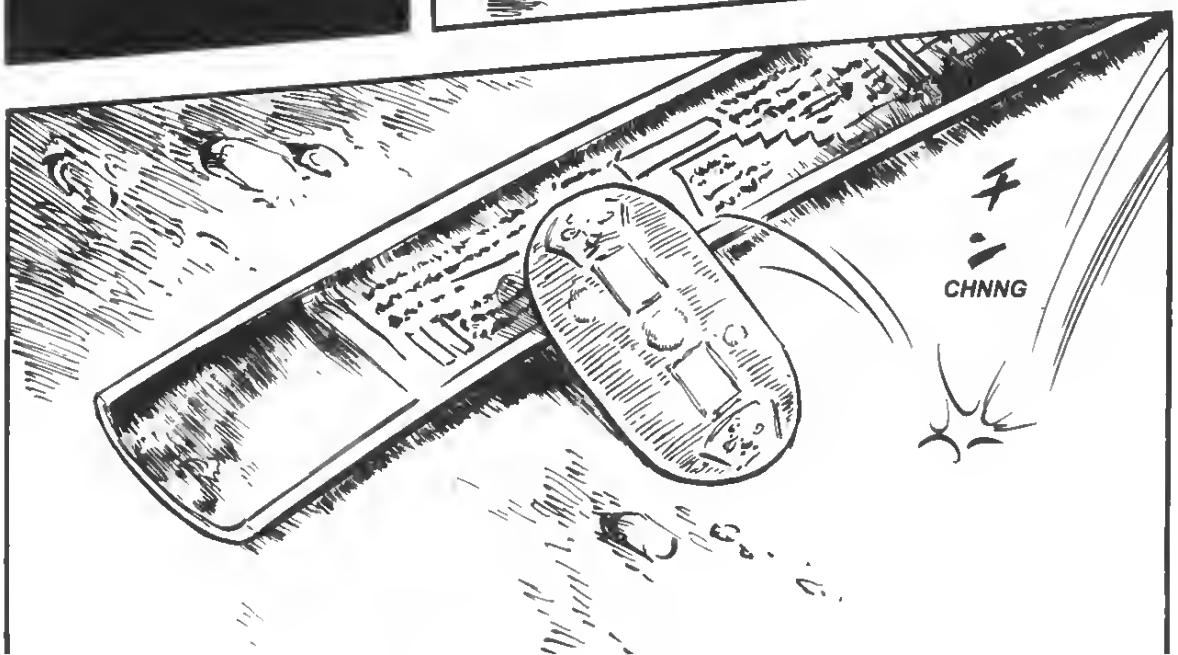
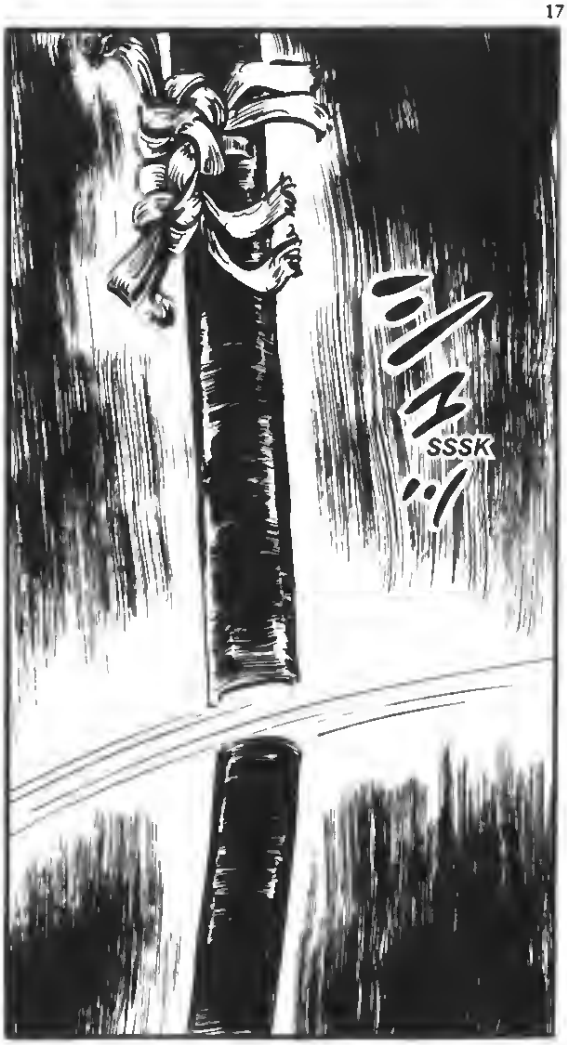

チン
CHNNG

INSIDE THE SCAB-BARD!
HRN! THE MAP TO YOUR TECHO'S BURIED GOLD...
ｸｲﾙ...!
FWK
TAKE THOSE PIECES AND THROW THEM AT THE MOON. AS HARD AS YOU CAN!
THAT GOLD, DAIGORO! IT CAN ONLY DO OHAN HARM!

17



WHSST
SSSHT

SPAK
POKK

THE FIRST: THE JIGEN SCABBARD. THE END.

EPILOGUE

GOSEKI KOJIMA, HIDEKI MORI, AND I

If there had been no Goseki Kojima in this world, I think there would have been no Kazuo Koike. I feel as if we were bound together by a bond like fate, a relationship that could not be fully described by trite phrases like "sworn friends" or "famous duos." How many works did the two of us bring to the world? It would not have been possible for so many works to be received so favorably by so many readers if they had come from the hand of a single person.

Yet, with so many things still left to ink and draw, Goseki-san went on ahead and left me behind. "Can we never do another *jidaigeki* period drama together?" I asked myself in vain. It was the year 2000, and I sank to the bottom of a very dark place. Clouds raced by, time ran on, years piled up like ash, but I still grieved.

And then one day I woke from that deep sleep, feeling almost as if I had heard a voice calling out to me. The voice was telling me that the Brazilian soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo had gotten his hair cut to look like Daigoro's. And then I realized that there were many more voices out there, many, many voices, asking, "What happened to Daigoro?"

Then Asahi TV announced it would do a new *Lone Wolf* television series in 2002. Reporters started coming around, and my surroundings became suddenly very busy. People had not forgotten *Lone Wolf and Cub* after all, not after all those years. People say that the times call forth works of art and fiction, and perhaps these new times were calling back *Lone Wolf* as well.

It was just about that time that I received a request from *Shūkan Post* magazine to write a sequel to *Lone Wolf and Cub*. My spirits soared just to be asked, but there still seemed no way that I could break the seal I had placed on the story. My friend and collaborator Goseki-san was gone. *Lone Wolf* had not been my work alone. I needed Goseki-san's permission to start it up again. And not only that—whoever was to illustrate such a sequel would have to be an artist at least the equal, if not the better, of Goseki-san himself.

It was then that I met a certain manga artist named Hideki Mori, an already accomplished artist of great talent who had received the fortieth Shogakukan Manga Award for his 1993 work *Bokko*, set during the era of China's warring states. Of course, I knew of *Bokko* and had read it. While Mori was clearly a great and accomplished talent, it seemed to me that he should not be compared to Goseki-san.

And yet, there was a fire in his eyes when I met him. His hand when he shook mine was literally burning, even shaking. When I asked him why, he told me that reading *Lone Wolf and Cub* had led him to enter the world of manga. He said that he had learned his own art by studying Goseki-san's work. His earnest eyes were full of emotion. And when I looked at the artwork he'd brought with him, I was astonished. I had thought before that his work resembled Goseki-san's, but this new art actually approached it. Unaware of those around us, my eyes filled shamelessly with tears.

The next day I called on Mrs. Kojima, Goseki-san's widow. I asked her if she would give her approval and permission to let Hideki Mori create original work based on Goseki-san's art. She agreed, and I, out of respect for Goseki-san's creative rights, resolved that the new series would include the words, "Original art concept by Goseki Kojima."

If at some time in the future another past work comes back to life as a sequel or a remake

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as this one has, I firmly believe that the creative rights of the original illustrator should be honored as we have honored them here in *New Lone Wolf and Cub*.

That said, however, even if other works are brought back in the future, I doubt there may be others that start up again, as this one does, from the very instant the original one came to an end.

In *New Lone Wolf and Cub*, Daigoro, frozen by his dead father's side, slowly begins to walk once again. The person who takes Daigoro by his hand anew is the founder of the famous Jigen-*ryū* school of swordsmanship, Tōgō Shigekata. In that there is again a wolf accompanying this child on his journey, there is no change. But this time it is a tale being told by the three of us: myself, Hideki Mori, and Goseki-san.

With all our strength.

Kazuo Koike
Late night, August 5, 2004

ŌGAMI ITTŌ AND DAIGORO: A STUDY IN FATHERS AND SONS

SOME POINTS FOR ENJOYING *NEW LONE WOLF AND CUB*

The best-selling *Kozure Ōkami* (*Lone Wolf and Cub*) is one of the legendary works of manga. At the time of this writing, it has sold 8.3 million copies in Japan alone. Add the many translated editions overseas, and sales jump to 11.8 million. Almost everyone in Japan recognizes the name of this series, which has been adapted for television and film many times, each triggering a new boom. *Lone Wolf and Cub* is a masterpiece of *jidaigeki* historical manga and one of the representative works of the manga form.

The original *Lone Wolf and Cub* was serialized in 142 episodes and ran for nearly six years, from September 1970 to April 1976. Today, more than three decades later, it continues to entrance countless readers through numerous reprints and dramatizations. What is the source of this work's remarkable power? In order to better enjoy *New Lone Wolf and Cub*, the first original *Lone Wolf* story in twenty-seven years, let's go back in time and analyze the original *Lone Wolf and Cub*'s allure.

That stunning last scene was really a suicide?

The deadly assassin "Lone Wolf," Ōgami Ittō, was once a former high official of the Tokugawa *bakufu*, the shogunate. He was, in fact, the *kōgi kaishakunin*, the shogunate's official executioner.

In the world of *Lone Wolf and Cub*, the *kōgi kaishakunin* is positioned as one of three branches created by the shogunate in order to control—and if necessary, eliminate—the *daimyō* lords of Japan's feudal *han* domains, then under the loose and sometimes restive control of the mighty Tokugawa clan, from whom the *shōgun* was drawn. These three institutions—assassins, spies, and the executioner—were secretive, working in the background of the *bakuhan* system of *bakufu* central government and regional *han* that controlled and administered the entire country. At the behest of the *shōgun* and his officials, these institutions wielded extraordinary power.

In *Lone Wolf and Cub*, the loyal Ōgami Ittō is framed as a traitor and his beloved wife murdered by agents of Yagyū Retsudō, the leader of the *Ura*-Yagyū, a secret wing of the powerful Yagyū clan tasked with political assassinations. Retsudō is using all the stratagems at his command to consolidate political power in his own hands, and is displeased by the favor Ittō holds in the eyes of the *shōgun*. Returning from Edo Castle, Ittō finds his pregnant wife murdered in the middle of labor, and next to her bloody body his just-born son Daigoro, umbilical cord still uncut. Retsudō has staged the murder to reveal planted "evidence" that Ittō is secretly praying for the fall of the Tokugawa regime.

To wreak revenge upon Retsudō and the *Ura*-Yagyū, Ittō resolves to abandon the rules of *bushidō*, the way of the samurai, and to walk as an assassin in the hell of *meifumadō*, as one already dead to the world of men, using the five hundred *ryō* gold pieces he collects for every killing to build his war chest for his campaign of vengeance. But Retsudō has no intention of letting Ittō live. He unleashes the *Ura*-Yagyū assassins and their allies in relentless attacks to silence father and son . . .

Thus begins a story that mesmerizes readers all the way through to its stunning finale. The battle to the death between Ittō and his hated enemy Retsudō is a staggering set piece that will live on in manga history. The final battle alone unfolds over thirty-three episodes, disrupted by unexpected truces and deadly natural

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catastrophes, until finally reaching its powerful conclusion. There must be many readers who still vividly remember that last moment when Daigoro, his father fallen at last, runs Retsudō's own broken spear head into his father's killer.

But there also begins a mystery. What are we to make of those final words Retsudō leaves us as he dies, clutching Daigoro tightly to his chest? "My . . . grandchild . . ." These last words in the six-year series caused an uproar when first published. Speculation raged that Daigoro had actually been Retsudō's own secret grandchild. But there is, in fact, a different meaning hidden in Retsudō's final words.

Ittō and Retsudō—the hatred between them is unquenchable. But as they cross swords in battle again and again, an understanding that transcends their hatred also grows between them. As *Lone Wolf and Cub* unfolds, Retsudō loses all his own sons, his only daughter, his entire clan, to Ōgami's sword. Now, with Ittō fallen, Retsudō's only remaining relationship in the world is with Daigoro. No wonder that final cry, "My grandchild!" bursts from his lips.

Retsudō, whose affection for the stalwart Daigoro has swelled until it surpasses both hatred and revenge, is in that final moment stabbed by the child himself. There is in fact no way that Daigoro has the physical strength to actually overpower this man who killed both his parents. In fact, it is Retsudō who kills himself, by lifting Daigoro and hugging him close, driving the rest of the broken spear shaft through his own body. It is a fitting final act for Retsudō, the last of the mighty Yagyū.

The Academy Award of American comics

The larger-than-life conflict between Ōgami Ittō, his son Daigoro, and Yagyū Retsudō and its stunning conclusion shook the hearts of readers not only in Japan but around the world.

At the time of this writing, *Lone Wolf and Cub* has been translated into English, French, German, and other languages, nine countries in all, and has been a comics bestseller in every one. Total foreign sales already top 3.5 million copies.

In 2001, the English translation of *Lone Wolf and Cub* won the Will Eisner Comics Industry Award in the US, the Academy Award of the American comics industry. It also won the equally prestigious Harvey Award two years in a row, in 2001 and 2002.

The story has also impacted the culture of comics and film, where it has been introduced. To take just one example, the 2002 Hollywood movie *Road to Perdition*, featuring Tom Hanks and Paul Newman, was based on a graphic novel of the same name written by Max Allan Collins, who freely acknowledges *Lone Wolf*'s influence. With this film, a distinctive Japanese worldview made it all the way to Hollywood.

There have been many movies based on *Lone Wolf and Cub* in Japan as well. The first was *Kozure Ōkami: Ko o kashi, ude kashitsukamatsuru* (Lone Wolf and Cub: Son for hire, sword for hire), helmed by legendary *jidaigeki* samurai movie director Misumi Kenji and scripted by Kazuo Koike himself. The great actor Wakayama Tomisaburō and child actor Tomikawa Akihiro gave fierce performances as Ittō and Daigoro in this film, released in English as *Lone Wolf and Cub: Sword of Vengeance*. Five more well-received sequels followed, known collectively in English release as the "Baby Cart" series. *Lone Wolf and Cub* returned to the silver screen in 1993 with *Kozure Ōkami: Sono chisaki te ni* (Lone Wolf and Cub: In those small hands; released in English as *Lone Wolf and Cub: The Final Conflict*), with Ittō played this time by the well-known actor Tamura Masakazu.

What must surely be the most important dramatization in Japan, however, came in 1973 when *Lone Wolf and Cub* debuted on television in a long-running series starring Yorozuya Kinnosuke as Ittō Ōgami and Nishikawa Kazutaka as Daigoro (Takumi Satō succeeded Nishikawa in season three). The series averaged Nielsen ratings of 16.9 percent over its three-

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year run. The theme song, "Kozure Ōkami," was sung by popular star Hashi Yukio and went on to become a hit on its own, selling more than 400,000 copies. The onomatopoeic opening line, "*Shito shito pitchan*," the sound of raindrops as Daigoro waits alone for his father to return from battle (based on the manga's powerful episode 22, "Parting Frost"), still triggers memories for a generation of Japanese TV viewers.

In all, there have already been five *Lone Wolf and Cub* series and two television specials at the time of this writing, with the role of Ōgami Ittō being inherited by Takahashi Hideki and, most recently, Kitaōji Kinya in the TV Asahi series launched in 2002.

The bond between father and son: Reading between the lines

Why does *Lone Wolf and Cub* still mesmerize so many Japanese after so many years? Could it be because we feel both identification with and nostalgia for that ideal image of the Japanese father, an image that has increasingly been lost today, that Ittō conveys to Daigoro "with his back," as we say in Japan—not with words but by the example of the way he lives?

If that is true, then what exactly is this "father image"? What kind of "back" did Ittō present to Daigoro to learn from? Let us look at the words Ittō himself left as his legacy to his son.

Entrapped by Yagyū Retsudō's plot and commanded to commit ritual *seppuku*, Ittō dresses both himself and Daigoro in the white robes of death, then says this to his still uncomprehending baby son:

> *To avenge the Ōgami clan and clear the name of the* kaishakunin *executioner, I abandon the way of the samurai, and travel the path to hell, a living demon of* meifumadō*!*

This is no ordinary resolution to show a child, and it does not end there. Saying, "Daigoro! You must find your own path!" Ittō places a child's *temari* ball and a *dōtanuki* sword before his son. Daigoro chooses the sword, and father and son "walk in *meifumadō*" together. Then there is this famous line:

> *Every person's path in life is different . . . For us there is our path. It is said that good times and bad times come in cycles, and that there is life in death. Your path in life is something you must carve out for yourself.*

From the moment Ittō sets foot on the assassins' road, he has abandoned life and lives with death in his heart. It is a father's duty to teach his son to overcome grief when his parents die and to continue on with his own life, which he does as they embark on their final approach to Edo and battle with Retsudō.

> *Should your father die and you are alone, look to the moon. There is father and mother and self. To see the moon is to be with us always. Let sorrow and loneliness fade away . . . If father dies and becomes one with the moon,* ***you*** *must finish our quest.*

And last, before his final battle with Retsudō, already wounded and his sword broken, Ittō delivers his parting words to his son. These are the words invoked so powerfully in the prologue of *New Lone Wolf and Cub* at the beginning of this volume:

> *Daigoro, where do rivers go? In that world of rebirth, and all worlds, you are my son! We are father and child! Forever!*

This is the same Ōgami Ittō who, to deceive his enemies, was willing to use his son to achieve victory, to deliberately leave him to drown, to bury him in a cave of snow. But at his core is a father's fierce love for his child.

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Is there a model for the "wolf child" Daigoro?

Both Ittō's resolution and his love for Daigoro appear in their names. Ittō chose the name "Daigoro," and he explains it to his wife before her death:

> *Undaunted by poverty, unspoiled by wealth! It is the name of a man who can live forthrightly in his knowledge of the five realms of Hell, Famine, Beast, Slaughter, and Heaven, and gain true freedom in the cycle of reincarnation . . . "Daigo" can be both the five realms, and the moment of enlightenment.*

And indeed, Daigoro, who has been raised watching the back of such a father, is no ordinary three-year-old. Thanks to having watched his father's battles to the death from his baby cart with wide, intent eyes, at this tender age he has already achieved something that even the most accomplished samurai rarely do: *shishōgan*, the eyes of life and death, which an obsessed sword master who seeks to test them describes in "Parting Frost" as eyes that . . .

> *. . . only a swordsman who has cut through death itself, who has walked through the splattering blood of countless slaughters, can possess!! Eyes that even I, whose sword has dealt death beyond counting, may never attain.*

Moreover, Daigoro already knows that his father receives money to kill other people and understands that ultimately his own life and death depend on himself alone. Infused with that knowledge, he has been raised into a "wolf child," rebuffing the pity of his enemies, ready to snatch up a sword at the faintest whiff of *sakki* death lust.

Yet, in contradiction to that ice-cold spirit, his face is still cute and lovable when he suddenly comes alight.

It turns out that there actually is a model for this remarkable child character, but not at all what one might expect. The model is a traditional *Hakata ningyō* clay doll, given to author Kazuo Koike by his mother. Koike in turn entrusted the figurine to artist Goseki Kojima, who used it to craft the image of Daigoro.

In passing, it is worth noting that the phonetic reading of Ōgami Ittō's name, although it is written with completely different Chinese *kanji* characters, means "One Wolf."

And what of Daigoro, left alone on the battlefield?

The character of Daigoro is one of the elements that has supported the enduring popularity of *Lone Wolf and Cub* over the years. And it is for that reason that when the series ended, there was a flood of questions from readers demanding to know what happens to Daigoro, now that he's been left behind.

The final battle to the death between Ittō and Retsudō takes place on the Hatcho Strand, the banks of a waterway in Fukagawa, then the eastern outskirts of Edo, the future Tokyo. Worried for Retsudō's life, the *shōgun* rides to Hatcho, the samurai of the *shinpan sanke* branches of the Tokugawa clan, the most trusted *han* the *jikisan*, Edo's *machikata* constabulary gather. At the same time, the warriors of the Shimazu *han* and the other restive *tozama daimyō*, who loathe Retsudō for pulling the strings of the shogunate from the shadows, also ride.

The *shōgun* desperately wants to save Retsudō, who has worked together with him to uphold the shogunate. But if he commands his troops to intervene in a private death feud, he will as good as confirm the rumored collusion between himself and Retsudō before the very eyes of the angry *tozama daimyō*.

And as for the *tozama*, Retsudō is a hated enemy who has stooped to every vile means

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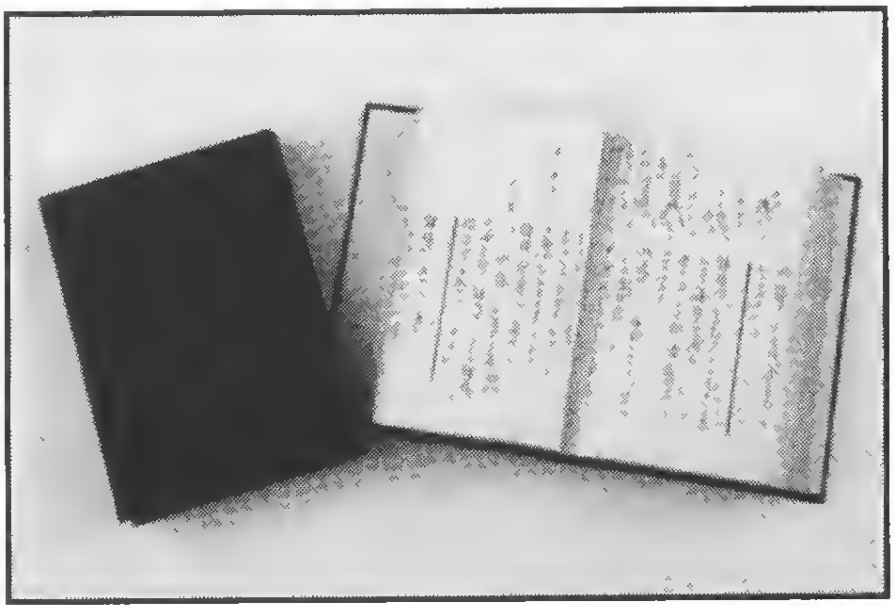
possible to try to bring down their domains. Yet, if they throw in their lot with Ōgami Ittō, a criminal assassin, they would be declaring open rebellion against the shogunate . . .

Neither side can move. And in that unbearable tension, with all-out war just a misstep away, Ittō and Retsudō remain locked in battle throughout the long night until, with the rising dawn, their last strength expended, both pass away . . .

This series, *New Lone Wolf and Cub,* begins with that last scene, the end of *Lone Wolf and Cub*. Now a stirring new story begins, the story of what happened next to the child Daigoro, left alone and abandoned on the Hatcho Strand.

Collected and abridged from *Shūkan Post* magazine (September 14, 2003, issue).

This *Hakata ningyō* clay figurine became the model for Daigoro.



Kazuo Koike's original script, written by hand, including detailed directions for the background art.

新子連れ狼

FOOTNOTES

page 20: A *dōtanuki* battle sword made by legendary swordsmith Masakuni of Higo-no-kuni on Japan's southern island of Kyushu. Swordsmiths engraved their names on the tangs of their blades.

page 45: The *kiai* battle cry of the Jigen-*ryū* sword school, founded by the historical Tōgō Shigekata (also called Tōgō Chūi). Jigen-*ryū* calls for defeating your enemy with an unblockable first stroke.

page 59: The opening lines of the *Hanya Shingyō*, the Japanese rendering of the Sanskrit *Prajnaparamita Hridaya* ("The Heart of the Perfect Wisdom" sutra), one of the most famous sutras in Buddhism, often chanted at funerals in Japan.

page 72: Matsudaira Izu-no-kami (Matsudaira Nobutsuna), chief councilor to the fourth *shōgun*, Tokugawa Ietsuna. He had the nickname "Clever Izu."

page 74: The Shimazu clan ruled over southern Kyushu and the Okinawa island chain.

page 75: At the Battle of Sekigahara (1600), Tokugawa Ieyasu's forces routed the *daimyō* of western Japan, paving the way for the Tokugawa shogunate.

page 75: The Shimabara rebellion by converted Christian peasants in Kyushu began in 1637. The revolt was brutally put down, and the shogunate tightened its ban on Christianity and expelled all missionaries and other foreigners.

page 76: Each samurai family had a crest considered synonymous with the clan itself. The Tokugawa clan crest was a three-leafed hollyhock. To point a sword toward the *shōgun*'s crest was to point a sword toward the *shōgun* himself, an unforgivable act of treason.

page 103: All of Japan's *daimyō* were required to maintain an estate in Edo and spend time there every year. It was a tool of shogunate control.

GLOSSARY

baba An old woman; a crone.

bon Satsuma dialect: child.

bushidō The way of the warrior.

daimyō A feudal lord.

dōtanuki A battle sword; literally, "sword that cuts through torsos."

go-rōjū The inner circle of councilors directly advising the *shōgun*. The *rōjū* were the ultimate advisory body to the Tokugawa shogunate's national government. (*Go* is an honorific prefix, a marker of respect.)

go-sanke A branch of the Tokugawa family tree. (*Go* is an honorific prefix, a marker of respect.)

han A feudal domain.

Jigen-ryū A traditional school of Japanese martial arts founded in the sixteenth century by the historical Tōgō Shigekata in Satsuma Province. Jigen-*ryū* focuses mainly on swordsmanship and is known for its emphasis on the first strike.

jikisan Direct retainers of the *shōgun*.

jō A unit of measurement equal to ten *shaku*, approximately 3.3 yards.

kōgi kaishakunin The *shōgun*'s own second, who performed executions ordered by the *shōgun*.

koku A bale of rice. The traditional measure of a *han*'s wealth, marking its agricultural land and productivity.

machikata Town policemen.

meifumadō The Buddhist hell. The way of demons and damnation.

metsuke An inspector, a post combining the functions of chief of police and chief intelligence officer.

ohan Satsuma dialect: you, your.

oi Satsuma dialect: I, me, my.

o-niwaban Ninja; literally, "one in the garden."

onmitsu Ninja.

o-yakata-sama The head of a ninja clan. (*Sama* is an honorific suffix, a marker of respect for superiors.)

ryō A gold piece.

ryū Often translated as "school." The many variations of swordsmanship and other martial arts were passed down from generation to generation to the offspring of the originator of a technique or set of techniques, and to any *deishi* students that sought to learn from the master. The largest schools had their own *dōjō* training centers and scores of students. An effective swordsman had to study the different techniques of the different schools to know how to block them in combat. Many *ryū* also had a set of special, secret techniques that were only taught to school initiates.

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Satsuma An Edo-period domain including modern-day provinces of Satsuma, Ōsumi, and Hyūga of Kagoshima and Miyazaki Prefectures on the island of Kyushu.

shaku A unit of measurement equal to ten *sun*, approximately thirty centimeters.

shinobi Ninja.

shinpan A *daimyō* related to the *shōgun*.

shōgun One of Japan's military governors from the twelfth to nineteenth centuries.

shogunate The government, rule, or office of the *shōgun*.

shūbi To feel relieved, to take heart in.

soi Satsuma dialect: this.

tansakunin Ninja.

techo Satsuma dialect: father.

tozama daimyō A *daimyō* who rallied to the Tokugawa side only after the Tokugawa victory at Sekigahara. Required to spend every other year, or part of each year, in Edo.

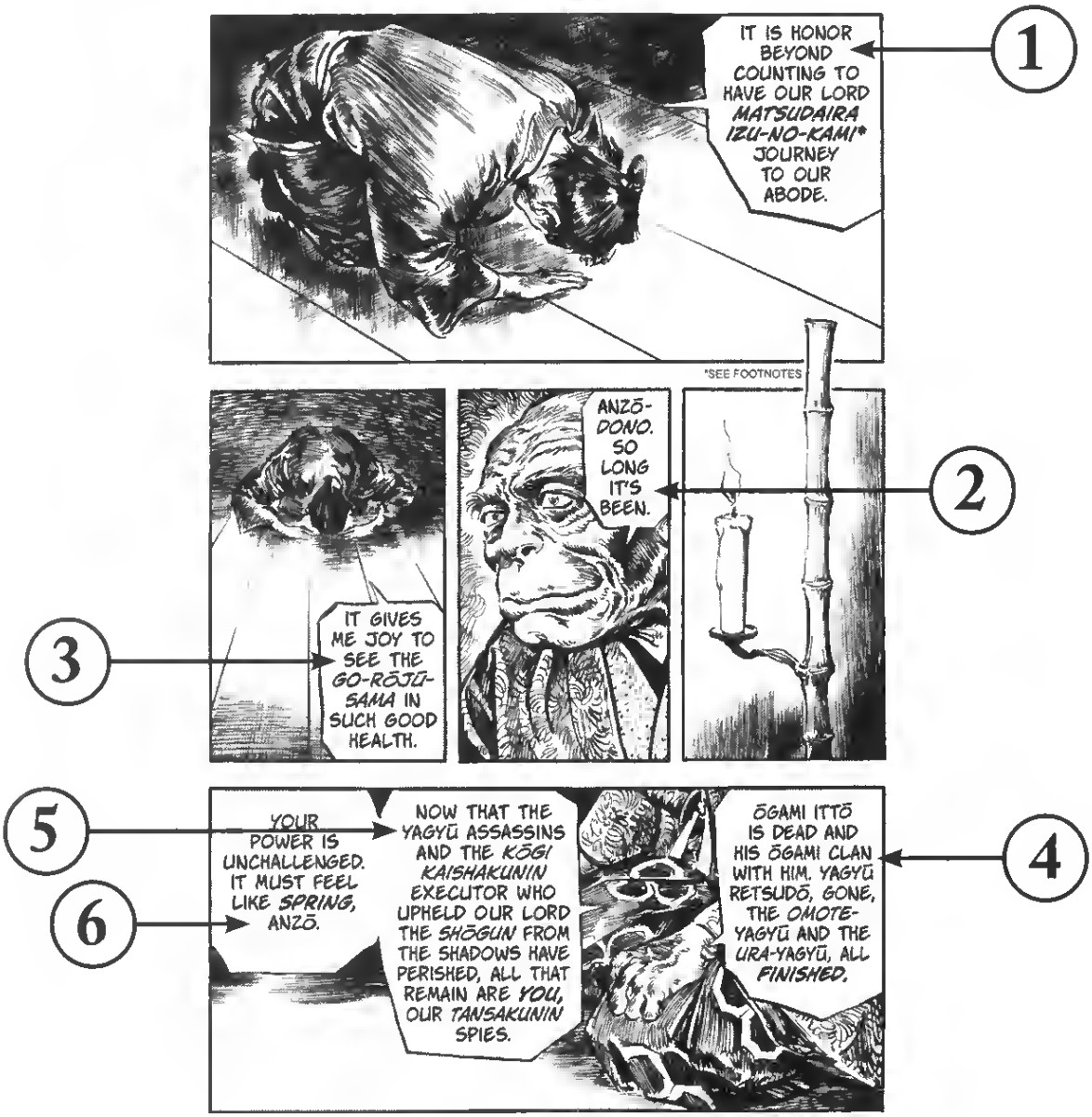
yashiki A residence or estate of a *daimyō*.

yoka Satsuma dialect: good, well done.

STOP!

THIS IS THE BACK OF THE BOOK!

This manga collection is translated into English, but arranged in right-to-left reading format to maintain the artwork's visual orientation as originally drawn and published in Japan. If you've never read comics this way before, take a look at the diagram below to give yourself an idea of how to go about it. Basically, you'll be starting in the upper right-hand corner, and will read each word balloon and panel moving right to left. It may take a little getting used to, but you should get the hang of it very quickly. Have fun! If this is the millionth manga you've read this way, never mind. ^_^


1
IT IS HONOR BEYOND COUNTING TO HAVE OUR LORD *MATSUDAIRA IZU-NO-KAMI** JOURNEY TO OUR ABODE.
*SEE FOOTNOTES
2
ANZŌ-*DONO*. SO LONG IT'S BEEN.
3
IT GIVES ME JOY TO SEE THE *GO-RŌJŪ-SAMA* IN SUCH GOOD HEALTH.
4
ŌGAMI ITTŌ IS DEAD AND HIS ŌGAMI CLAN WITH HIM. YAGYŪ RETSUDŌ, GONE, THE *OMOTE*-YAGYŪ AND THE *URA*-YAGYŪ, ALL *FINISHED*.
5
NOW THAT THE YAGYŪ ASSASSINS AND THE *KŌGI KAISHAKUNIN* EXECUTOR WHO UPHELD OUR LORD THE *SHŌGUN* FROM THE SHADOWS HAVE PERISHED, ALL THAT REMAIN ARE *YOU*, OUR *TANSAKUNIN* SPIES.
6
YOUR POWER IS UNCHALLENGED. IT MUST FEEL LIKE *SPRING*, ANZŌ.

KAZUO KOIKE & GOSEKI KOJIMA

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